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## Grave Stele of Hegeso

### *In the Dipylon Cemetery, Athens*

This fine example of ancient Greek mortuary sculpture, which has survived the vicissitudes of more than twenty centuries, takes us back to the time when Meleager flourished, and compiled the first known Greek anthology. It was called the Garland, and among its unfading petals are those that commemorate the lovely, lost Heliodore of the anthologist:

"And on thy tomb, where I have Mourned so sore,
I offer . . .
Memories of our kindness and our love."

# The Bibelot

A Reprint of Poetry and Prose for Book Lovers, chosen in part from scarce editions and sources not generally known . . . .

VOLUME II

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# The Bibelot

THE Garland of Meleager, — *what remains of it is found in* The Anthology, — *was once flawless and complete. Indeed the history of* The Anthology *opens with his name; the first authentic gatherer of old Greek roses that with many fallen petals by the way, still yield a perfume, 'unfading blossoms of a fadeless Spring.'*

*Born at Gadara in Palestine, Meleager flourished as early as B. C. 90, and the little known of his life has been amply and eloquently dealt with by Professor Mackail,* (Select Epigrams from the Greek Anthology, *1890*), *and by Symonds,* (Studies of the Greek Poets, *1893*.)

*In some of his fragments there are touches of that intense modern subjectivity so subtly voiced by Browning in* A Toccato of Galuppi's. *For, to take a splendid instance, the marriage flutes are still resounding in our ears, Clearista's bridal torches*

*yet flare upon our eyes, fading away, that mirth and music, into her unawakening sleep.*

*To the mind of Keats the coldness of the Grecian marbles became as to Pygmalion, alive and warm with passionate desire. And for us, who now read Meleager's verse, there comes again a far-off sense of continuity, else it could not move us as it does.*

*Scholars like Symonds and Lang, Mackail and Headlam have recovered and recast this old Greek life of vanished loves and passions void and vain,— a life that repeats itself from age to age,— a lyric cry not to be silenced in the heart of man.*

# A FLOWER *of* LAURIUM.

*"Looking back again 2000 years we might have seen at Laurium a certain yellow flower which must have flourished in the golden age of Greece and have faded for a while with the greatness of her people. For when the piles of rubbish and scoriæ were removed and the fresh air and sunlight played upon the soil below we are told that seeds long buried revived and a little flower unknown to the botanists of this century sprang forth and blossoms and lives as the flower of Laurium."*

(LAURIUM: *the Romance of a Mine, by the* COUNTESS OF JERSEY.)

"MELEAGER had a spirit of the subtlest and the sweetest, a heart of the tenderest, and a genius of the purest that has been ever granted to an elegist of earthly love. While reading his verse, it is impossible to avoid laying down the book and pausing to exclaim: How modern is the phrase, how true the passion, how unique the style! Though Meleager's voice has been mute a score of centuries, it yet rings clear and vivid in our ears; because the man was a real poet, feeling intensely, expressing forcibly and beautifully, steeping his style in the fountain of tender sentiment which is eternal. We find in him none of the cynicism which defiles Straton, or of the voluptuary's despair which gives to Agathias the morbid splendour of decay, the colours of corruption. All is simple, lively, fresh with joyous experience in his verse. . . . Meleager had a soul that inclined to all beautiful and tender things. . . . His poetry has the sweetness and the splendour of the rose, the rapture and full-throated melody of the nightingale."

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.
(*Studies of the Greek Poets.*)

## PROEM.

Of every flower his *garland* did Meleager twine
But he doth of the garland himself the garland shine.

WALTER HEADLAM.

For whom the fruitage of this strain, my Muse?
And who among the bards hath made this wreath?
Meleager wove it, and his weaving gives
For keepsake to most noble Diocles.
Here many lilies are of Anyte,
And white lilies of Mæro, many an one,
And Sappho's flowers — so few, but roses all —
And daffodils of Melanippides
Heavy with ringing hymns — and thy young branch,
Vine of Simonides, and twisted in
Nossis, thine iris flower that breathes of myrrh,
And in its tablets are Love's stores of wax.
Herewith, Rhianus' scented marjoram,
And the sweet crocus of Erinna too,
Clear as the girl's own skin — and hyacinth,
Alcæus' hyacinth that speaks to bards —
And a dark spray of Samius' laurel tree,
Fresh ivy-clusters of Leonidas,
And foliage of Mnasalcus' needled pine.
And from the plane-tree song of Pamphilus
He cut a branch, and with the walnut boughs
Of Pancrates he twined it, and white leaves
Of Tymnes' poplar. Nicias' green mint

And sandwort of Euphemus from the shore;
And Damagetus' purple violet,
And the sweet myrtle of Callimachus
Full of sharp honey — with Euphorion's flower.
The lychnis and, therewith, his cyclamen,
The Muses call after the sons of Zeus.
And Hegesippus' maddening grape-cluster
He set therein, and Persus' scented flag
And a sweet apple from Diotimus' tree —
Pomegranate flowers of Menecrates,
And the myrrh branches of Nicænetus,
Phænnus' flax plant — Simmias' tall wild pear.
And a few leaves he pulled of Parthenis
Her delicate meadow-parsley, and — gleanings fair
Of the honey-dropping muses — golden ears
From the wheat-harvest of Bacchylides.
And old Anacreon — that sweet strain of his,
An unsown flowerage of his nectar songs:
And the rough white-thorn of Archilochus
He gathered from the pasture — as it were.
Only a few drops from a sea of bloom —
Young shoots of Alexander's olive grown
And Polycleitus' dark blue cornflower. There
He set Polystratus' the amaracus,
The poets' flower, and from Antipater
A young Phœnician cypress: and therewith
Eared Syrian spikenard which he gathered him
Out of his singing they call Hermes' gift,

And Poseidippus too, and Hædulus —
Flowers of the field — and windflowers springing glad
In airs Sicilian, and the golden bough
Of sacred Plato, shining in its worth.
And he threw in Aratus learned in stars,
Cutting the first spires of his heaven-high pine,
Chæræmon's leafy lotus, mixing it
With flox of Phædimus and Chamomile —
The crinkled oxeye — of Antagoras,
And fresh green thyme of Theodoridas —
The wine-cup's charm — and Phanieus' beanflowers too,
With many shoots fresh sprung of other bards.
Adding thereto white early violets
Of his own muse. But to my friends I give
Thanks. And this gracious coronal of song
Be for all such as love these holy things.

WILLIAM M. HARDINGE.

## HELIODORE.

POUR wine, and cry again, again, again!
*To Heliodore!*
And mingle the sweet word ye call in vain
With that ye pour!
And bring to me her wreath of yesterday
That's dank with myrrh;
*Hesternæ Rosæ,* ah my friends, but they
Remember her!
Lo the kind roses, loved of lovers, weep
As who repine,
For if on any breast they see her sleep
It is not mine!

ANDREW LANG.

## HELIODORE.

### I

TEARS for my lady dead—
Heliodore!
Salt tears, and strange to shed,
Over and o'er;
Tears to my lady dead.
Love do we send,
Longed for, rememberèd,
Lover and friend!
Sad are the songs we sing,
Tears that we shed,
Empty the gifts we bring
Gifts to the dead!
Go, tears, and go, lament,
Fare from her tomb,
Wend where my lady went
Down through the gloom!
Ah, for my flower, my love,
Hades hath taken,
Ah, for the dust above
Scattered and shaken!
Mother of blade and grass,
Earth, in thy breast
Lull her that gentlest was
Gently to rest!

ANDREW LANG.

## II

TEARS, even far beneath the earth I send thee,
O Heliodore — bitter tears I pour;
Tokens of love, in Hades to attend thee.
And on thy tomb, where I have mourned so sore,
I offer — as libations poured above —
Memories of our kindness and our love.

O thou, among the dead belovèd even,
Meleager sorely, sorely wails for thee;
Vain homage, empty prayers to Hades given!
Ah, where may now my mourned-for blossom be?
Hades hath ravished, ravished it away,
And dust defiles my blooming flower to-day.

O Earth, all nourishing, to thee I make
My supplication — her I weep for take,
And gently fold her in thine arms, to rest,
Mother, against thy breast.

ALMA STRETTELL.

## III.

TEARS for a gift I bring thee in the dust,
The remnant of desire come unto doom,
And sorrow's tears in sorrow on thy tomb
Pour for remembrance of thy love and trust.
With bitter, bitter wailing, as I must,
I give thee barren greeting in the gloom.
Ah me! my lovely flower that brake in bloom
Is stolen by death, and in the mould is thrust.
O Earth, great mother, at my tears' behest,
Close in thy clasp and fold her gently to thy breast!

ALFRED J. BUTLER.

Now the bright crocus flames, and now
The slim narcissus takes the rain,
And, straying o'er the mountain's brow,
The daffodilies bud again.
The thousand blossoms wax and wane
On wold, and heath, and fragrant bough;
But fairer than the flowers art thou,
Than any growth of hill or plain.

Ye gardens, cast your leafy crown,
That my Love's feet may tread it down,
Like lilies on the lilies set;
My Love, whose lips are softer far
Than drowsy poppy petals are,
And sweeter than the violet!

ANDREW LANG.

## SPRING.

Now Winter's winds are banished from the sky,
Gay laughs the blushing face of flowery Spring:
Now lays the land her duskier raiment by
And dons her grass-green vest, for signal why
Young plants may choose themselves apparelling.

Now, drinking tender dews of generous morn,
The meadows break into their summer smile,
The rose unfolds her leaves: and glad, the while,
In far-off hills the shepherd winds his horn,
And his white brede the goatherd's heart beguile.

Now sail the sailors over billowing seas
While careless Zephyr fills the canvas fair,
And singing crowds with dances debonair
Praise Dionysus for the grapes' increase —
The berried ivy twisted in their hair.

Forth from the rotting hide now bees are come —
Deft craftsmen working well and warily —
And in the hive they settle, while they ply
Fresh-flowing waxen store, with busy hum,
And small pierced cells for their sweet industry.

Now shrilleth clear each several bird his note,
The Halcyon charms the wave that knows no gale,
About our eaves the swallow tells her tale,
Along the river banks the swan, afloat,
And down the woodland glades the nightingale.

Now tendrils curl and earth bursts forth anew —
Now shepherd's pipe and fleecy flocks are gay —
Now sailors sail, and Bacchus gets his due —
Now wild birds chirp and bees their toil pursue —
Sing, poet, thou — and sing thy best for May!

WILLIAM M. HARDINGE.

*Beauties, have ye seen this toy,*
*Called Love, a little boy,*
*Almost naked, wanton, blind;*
*Cruel now, and then as kind?*
*If he be amongst ye, say?*
*He is Venus' runaway.*

BEN JONSON.

## HUE AND CRY AFTER CUPID.

### I

HUE and cry for Love the wild! for early from his bed,
early in the morning hath he taken wing and fled.

Sweet in tears and sly of laughter, dauntless, prattling ever,
swift, with wings upon his back and at his side a quiver.

But the father of the rogue I cannot tell, for Sea,
Earth and Air alike declare: *No son of mine is he.*

For of all he is abhorred in every place; beware
lest he setteth for your souls even now another snare.

See, why at his lair he lies! I have discovered thee,
archer, lurking in the eyes of my Zenophile.

WALTER HEADLAM.

## II

I CRY you Love — at earliest break of day
But now, even now, his wings the wanderer spread
And passed away,
Leaving his empty bed.
Ho! ye that meet the boy — for such is he,
Full of sweet tears and wit; a fickle sprite
Laughing and free,
With wings and quiver bright!
Yet know I not on whom to father Love —
For earth denies the wanton child his name,
And air above,
And the broad sea the same,
With each and all he lives at feud. Beware
Lest, while I speak, he cast
A dainty snare
Over your hearts at last.
But see! his hiding-place, his very self,
Close to my hand, behold, the archer lies
A laughing elf
Within my lady's eyes.

WILLIAM M. HARDINGE.

## THE LITTLE LOVE-GOD.

### I

A PLAGUE is Love, a plague! but yet
what profit shall it prove
again and oft again to fret
and cry: *A plague is Love?*

The boy but laughs to hear such news;
chid with a tongue let loose,
enjoys it; and if I abuse,
he thrives upon abuse.

O hither through the green wave sent,
Cypris, I must admire
how thou from that moist element
has brought to birth a fire!

WALTER HEADLAM.

## II

Let him be sold, though still he sleep
upon his mother's breast!
let him be sold! why should I keep
so turbulent a pest?

For wingéd he was born, he leers,
and sharply with his nails
he scratches, and amid his tears
oft laughs the while he wails.

Withal and further, glances keen
he plies, devoid of shame,
a ceaseless babbler, wild, nor e'en
to his own dear mother tame.

An utter monster: on that ground
sold he shall be to-day:
if any trader outward bound
would buy a boy, this way!

But see, in tears beseecheth he:
nay, thee no more I sell:
fear not, with my Zenophile
remain thou here to dwell.

WALTER HEADLAM.

FAIR herald of the morning's track,
Come, Phosphor, with the ray
Of Hesper soon, to lead her back
Whom now thou lead'st away.

RICHARD GARNETT.

THOU sleep'st, soft silken flower. Would I were
Sleep,
For ever on those lids my watch to keep.
So should I have thee all my own; nor he,
Who seals Jove's wakeful eyes, my rival be.

JOHN HERMANN MERIVALE.

## TO A LOCUST.

CHARMER of longing — counsellor of sleep!
The cornfield's chorister
Whose wings to music whirr —
Come, mimic lute, my soul in songs to steep,
Brush tiny foot and wing
In tender musicking:
Come! out of sleepless care my heart uplift,
Locust, and set love free
With your shrill minstrelsy.
And, in the morning, I will give for gift
A fresh green leek to you
And kissing drops of dew.

WILLIAM M. HARDINGE.

Love brought by night a vision to my bed,
One that still wore the vesture of a child
But eighteen years of age — who sweetly smiled
Till of the lovely form false hopes were bred
And keen embraces wild.
Ah! for the lost desire that haunts me yet,
Till mine eyes fail in sleep that finds no more
That fleeting ghost! Oh, lovelorn heart, give o'er —
Cease thy vain dreams of beauty's warmth — forget
The face thou longest for!

WILLIAM M. HARDINGE.

## TO THE SHIPS.

O GENTLE ships that skim the seas,
And cleave the strait where Hellé fell,
Catch in your sails the Northern breeze,
And speed to Cos where she doth dwell,
My Love, and see you greet her well!
And if she looks across the blue,
Speak, gentle ships, and tell her true
"He comes, for Love hath brought him back,
No sailor, on the landward tack."

If thus, oh gentle ships, ye do,
Then may ye win the fairest gales,
And swifter speed across the blue,
While Zeus breathes friendly on your sails.

ANDREW LANG.

## "LOVE STILL HATH SOMETHING OF THE SEA."

### I

Thy love is like an April storm
Upon a false and fickle sea:
One day you shine, and sunny warm
Are those clear smiles you shower on me;
Next day from cloudy brows you rain
Your anger on the ruffled main.

"Around me all the deeps are dark;
I whirl and wander to and fro,
Like one who vainly steers his bark
'Mid winds that battle as they blow:—
Then raise the flag of love or hate,
That I at last may know my fate!"

### II

Cold blows the winter wind: 'tis Love,
Whose sweet eyes swim with honeyed tears,
That bears me to thy doors, my love,
Tossed by the storm of hopes and fears.

"Cold blows the blast of aching Love;
But be thou for my wandering sail,
Adrift upon these waves of love,
Safe harbour from the whistling gale!"

J. A. SYMONDS.

## LOVE AND THE STRANGER.

THE Lady of desire, a goddess, gave
My soul to thee;
To thee soft-sandalled Love hath sent a slave,
Poor naked me:

"A stranger on a stranger's soil, tight-bound
With bands of steel:—
I do but pray that we may once be found
Firm friends and leal!

"Yet thou dost spurn my prayers, refuse my love,
Still stern and mute;
Time will not melt thee, nor the deeds that prove
How pure my suit.

"Have pity, king, have pity! Fate hath willed
Thee god and lord:
Life in thy hands and death, to break or build,
For me is stored!"

J. A. SYMONDS.

## LOVE'S PERFIDY.

Did I not tell you so, and cry:
'Rash soul, by Venus, you'll be caught!
Ah, luckless soul, why will you fly
So near the toils that Love had wrought?'

"Did I not warn you? Now the net
Has tangled you, and in the string
You vainly strive, for Love has set
And bound your pinions, wing to wing:

"And placed you on the flames to pine,
And rubbed with myrrh your panting lip,
And when you thirsted given you wine
Of hot and bitter tears to sip.

"Ah, weary soul, fordone with pain!
Now in the fire you burn, and now
Take respite for a while again,
Draw better breath and cool your brow!

"Why weep and wail? What time you first
Sheltered wild Love within your breast,
Did you not know the boy your nursed
Would prove a false and cruel guest?

"Did you not know? See, now he pays
The guerdon of your fostering care
With fire that on the spirit preys,
Mixed with cold snow-flakes of despair!

"You chose your lot. Then cease to weep:
Endure this torment: tame your will:
Remember, what you sowed, you reap:
And, though it burns, 'tis honey still!"

J. A. SYMONDS.

## TWO REVEL-SONGS.

### I

THE die is cast! Nay, light the torch!
I'll take the road! Up, courage, ho!
Why linger pondering in the porch?
Upon Love's revel we will go.

"Shake off those fumes of wine! Hang care
And caution! What has Love to do
With prudence? Let the torches flare!
Quick, drown the doubts that hampered you!

"Cast weary wisdom to the wind!
One thing, but one alone, I know:
Love bent e'en Jove and made him blind!
Upon Love's revel we will go!"

### II

I'VE drunk sheer madness! Not with wine,
But old fantastic tales I'll arm
My heart in heedlessness divine,
And dare the road nor dream of harm!

"I'll join Love's rout! Let thunder break,
Let lightning blast me by the way!
Invulnerable Love shall shake
His ægis o'er my head to-day."

J. A. SYMONDS.

## CLEARISTA.

### I

Not Marriage but Death for bridegroom did Clearista receive when she loosed the knot of her maidenhood: for but now at even the flutes sounded at the bride's portal, and the doors of the wedding-chamber were clashed; and at morn they cried the wail, and Hymenæus put to silence changed into a voice of lamentation; and the same pine-brands flashed their torch-light before the bride-bed, and lit the dead on her downward way.

J. W. MACKAIL.

### II

For Death, not for Love, hast thou
Loosened thy zone!
Flutes filled thy bower but now,
Morning brings moan!
Maids round thy bridal bed
Hushed are in gloom,
Torches to Love that led
Light to the tomb!

ANDREW LANG.

## III

Not Marriage Clearista won to wait upon her wedding
but Death, when she unloosed the zone of her virginity:
for late the pipes at eventide were at her portal shedding
their music, and her chamber-doors resounded noisily;

And early on the morrow they raised a note of sorrow,
the bridal-chorus quieted became a chant of woe;
and so the self-same torches about her bower's porches
gave shine and for her perishéd lit up the path below.

WALTER HEADLAM.

## MELEAGER.

### I

OF HIMSELF.

TYRE brought me up, who born in thee had been,
Assyrian Athens, city Gadarene;
My name is Meleager, Eucrates
My sire, my skill with graceful strains to please;
My Syrian lineage do not discommend,
One world have all, one origin, one end;
Stricken in years, I yet can touch the string,
And this unto the tomb, my neighbour, sing;
Salute my garrulous old age, and be
Thine own what now thou honourest in me.

RICHARD GARNETT.

## II

OF HIS DEATH

AH! Love, my Master, hear me swear
By all the locks of Timo's hair,
By Demo, and that fragrant spell
Wherewith her body doth enchant
Such dreams as drowsy lovers haunt,
By Ilias' mirth delectable.
And by the lamp that sheds his light
On love and lovers all the night,
By those, ah Love, I swear that thou
Hast left me but one breath, and now
Upon my lips it fluttereth,
Yet *this* I'll yield, my latest breath,
Even this, oh Love, for thee to Death!

ANDREW LANG.

SUCH THE BLOSSOMS THAT WERE BORNE
BY THE GRECIAN SOIL OUTWORN,
WHOM THE PORTION TO POSSESS
OF ETERNAL YOUTHFULNESS
DID THE MUSES, KINDLY BENT,
WITH THE GRACES IN CONSENT,
WILL, UPON THEIR OPENING,
THEIR SWEET BEAUTY MARVELLING.
NOT OF GRECIAN BIRTH ARE WE,
BUT, NO GRECIANS THOUGH WE BE,
STILL TO US THE BLOOMS ARE DEAR,
BLOWN IN GREECE, AND NEVER SEAR.

WALTER HEADLAM.

# The Bibelot

As a writer of fascinating prose Miss Violet Paget, — or, as she signs her work, Vernon Lee, — has a distinct literary charm.* With affinities in thought and style to another gifted Englishwoman of letters, — A. Mary F. Robinson, (Madame Darmesteter,) — they both belong to a little group that, without touch of decadentism, is of very appreciable force and character.

In the delightful sketch we now reprint, (Juvenilia, *Vol. II, pp. 3-17,*) she has given us back a maker of forgotten tunes with the milieu of his faded glories about him. And in this connexion, the great poet of imaginative Suggestion stands in need of just this bit of sympathetic interpretation at her hands.

To bring together, therefore, Browning's 'Toccata' and 'The Immortality of the Maestro Galuppi,' preluded by a bar or so of his old-time music, is to possess insight

*of an elusive but illuminating sort, into a world of fallen days, — of dim Venetian nights and minor chords dissolved in thinnest air.*

*Who would not welcome a revival of these forgotten melodies? They had power to arrest the attention of a master of English prosody, and might again have speech with us, were we permitted to listen.*

---

* *Euphorion: Being Studies of the Antique and the Mediæval in the Renaissance* (*1884*).

*Studies of the Eighteenth Century in Italy* (*1880*).

*Belcaro: Being Essays on Sundry Æsthetical Questions* (*1882*).

*Juvenilia: Being a Second Series of Essays on Sundry Æsthetical Questions* (*1887*).

*These titles are given in the order of the editor's preference, but are by no means a complete list of Miss Paget's volumes.*

A MAKER
*of*
FORGOTTEN TUNES.

*From a Sonata by*
*Baldassare Galuppi.*

GALUPPI, Baldassare, called Buranello, was born on the island of Burano, near Venice, Oct. 6, 1706; he died at Venice, Jan. 3, 1784. He was the son of a barber, who played the violin in the entr'actes of the Theatre of Comedy. He studied under Lotti. Between 1722 and 1772, seventy-four operas of his making were produced, most of them at Venice, some at Vienna, St. Petersburg, and London. From 1762 to 1764, he was chapelmaster of Saint Mark's, and director of the Conservatory *degli Incurabili.* In 1765, Catherine II of Russia, called him to St. Petersburg, where he received yearly four thousand roubles, lodging, and a court carriage. So pleased was she with his opera, "Dido Abandoned," that she sent him after the first performance a snuff-box, diamond encrusted, and also one thousand ducats, "which," she said, "the Queen of Carthage had bequeathed to him in her testament." In 1768 he returned to Venice, and he staid there until he died. Besides his operas, he wrote music for the church, oratorios, and six sonatas for the clavichord.

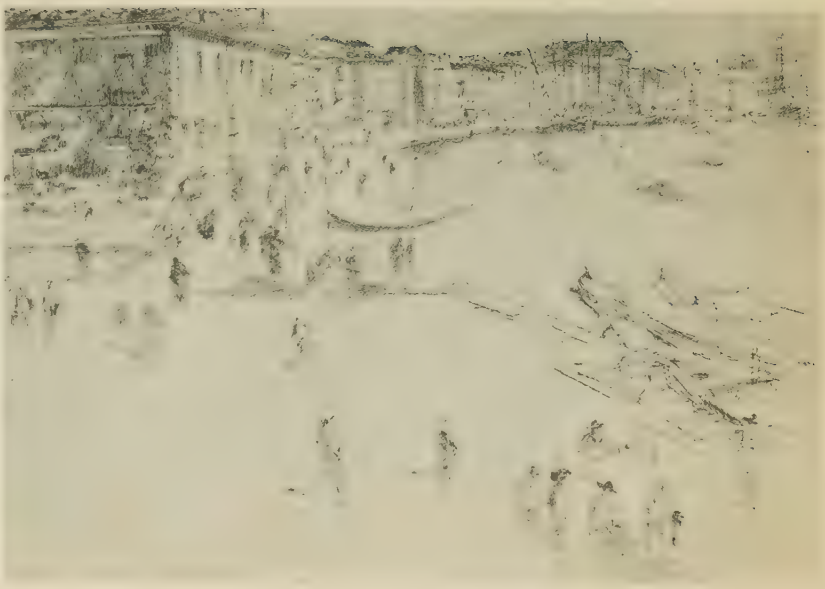
Burney saw him, in 1770, at Venice. He described him as "in figure little and thin, but he has very much the look of a gentleman. His character and conversation are natural, intelligent, and agreeable. . . . He has the appearance of a regular family man, and is esteemed at Venice as much for his private character as for his public talents. . . . His definition of good music I think admirable, and though short very comprehensive. It consists, he says, of *vaghezza, chiarezza, e buona modulazione,* (beauty, clearness, and good modulation)."

The Riva, No. 2

*From the etching by James A. McNeill Whistler*

Venice, with its canals and storied gondolas, possessed the same romance for Whistler, in 1880, that it had for Maestro Galuppi in the eighteenth century. Both Whistler and Galuppi were of slight physique but of robust creative power—and Whistler was never happier artistically than when etching the phantom city.

Courtesy of the New York Public Library.



## A BALLAD OF FORGOTTEN TUNES.

TO V. L.

FORGOTTEN seers of lost repute
That haunt the banks of Acheron,
Where have you dropped the broken lute
You played in Troy or Calydon?
O ye that sang in Babylon
By foreign willows cold and grey,
Fall'n are the harps ye hanged thereon,
*Dead are the tunes of yesterday!*

DeCoucy, is your music mute,
The quaint old plain-chant woe-begone
That served so many a lover's suit?
Oh, dead as Adam or Guédron!
Then, sweet DeCaurroy, try upon
Your virginals a virelay;
Or play, Orlando, one pavonne —
*Dead are the tunes of yesterday!*

But ye whose praises none refute,
Who have the immortal laurel won; —
Trill me your quavering close acute,
Astorga, dear unhappy Don!

One air, Galuppi! Sarti, one
So many fingers used to play! —
Dead as the ladies of Villon,
*Dead are the tunes of yesterday!*

ENVOY.

Vernon, in vain you stoop to con
The slender, faded notes to-day —
The Soul that dwelt in them is gone:
*Dead are the tunes of yesterday!*

A. MARY F. ROBINSON.

## THE IMMORTALITY OF THE MAESTRO GALUPPI.

In the month of August seventeen hundred and seventy, Baldassare Galuppi, surnamed *Il Buranello,* chapelmaster of St. Mark's, director of the music school of the *Iucurabili,* with thirty odd years of glory around him, ushered the enthusiastic Dr. Burney into his little study, and, pointing to the desk and spinette, said modestly, "This is where I dirty paper."

We can imagine the laughter, beatifically sonorous, of the English enthusiast; the laughter also, somewhat less beatific and sonorous, of the Venetian admirers, who had probably heard that modest little joke many times and oft; the smile of that good and illustrious little old man, the grand bows sweeping the floor with the three-cornered hat, all those ceremonious antics which disappeared with the "Your slave, sir!" and similar politenesses which we know from Goldoni. We can see the whole little comedy of enthusiasm and modesty on the threshold of that writing-closet, with the spinette in the background, the furniture painted over with nosegays, and the window opening on the canal; the lilac and pea-green coats, and

black gowns, and bob-wigs and pigtails; a little picture for Pietro Longhi.

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Affection, all this; little coquetries of a man accustomed to success, you will say. Likely enough. Still it would please me to believe that in those words of the good Galuppi, there had been a grain of sincerity. In that man, who felt himself growing old, and saw a lot of youngsters coming up (Sacchini, for instance, Sarti and Paisiello, youngsters now, alas, forgotten by the oldest great-grandfather), in that man, I say, there might really have been a certain diffidence; or at least that suspicion which must come to old people, and ought to be chronic in the artists of the most ephemeral of all arts, that one day all those precious scores, now furtively fingered by enthusiasts prying about the writing-table and spinette, may become, in the eyes of posterity, a mere heap of ruled paper, once white, now dirty, and fit only for the chandler's or the archive.

And bearing this in mind, I incline to believe that the Maestro Galuppi, who struck people as a modest and sincere little man,

may really have entertained some doubts concerning his own immortality. In which case the Maestro Galuppi was decidedly mistaken. The gods, and more especially their earthly representatives, municipal councillors and mayors, are always friendly to genius, neither do they allow it to be *drowned in the black waters of Lethe,* as people would have said in the days of Galuppi.

O genius, mysterious, perennial and supreme emanation of the divine; more powerful than ease, or pleasure, or vanity, or rapacity, or whatsoever baseness is nurtured in the human heart; genius which upraisest our soul more than virtue, and shakest it more than love, and draggest it along more irresistibly than beauty, making us soar up to heaven at the moment of kneeling on the earth; genius, thou also canst turn into children the most villainous sceptics; and turn into poets, poets of the great poetry which is not written nor printed but lived, the respectable creatures whose ideal consists in two thousand a year.

Of course we often attempt to deny it, as we would deny all loftier things, this despotic power of genius. But it is useless. Have I

not seen and heard an ex-hotel-keeper, mayor of a small watering-place, wax enthusiastic on hearing that Shelley had once spent two months in that place, and exclaim with child-like triumph — "Yes, we'll find out that house! we'll find it out; and we'll put up a marble slab with the inscription — Here lived and wrote the illustrious So-and-so" ?

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The crowd of half-naked raggamuffins, after having dogged us along the quays and across the square of Burano, rushes in after the gondola, which seeks vainly with the strength of both oars, to emerge from that shallow, greenish, slimy water, paved with potsherds, and now pullulating with those little human frogs, brown, yellow-headed, with their formidable glancing of white teeth and shrill vociferations—"*Paron, Paron, ghe no me lasa una pa' anca.*" A handful of coppers whips across the water, and all those heads duck, with a simultaneous yell. The gondolier on the stern bows himself outward, leaning with all his might on the oar; and the gondola, once out of the shallow, glides quickly across the violet wavelets of the lagoon.

Our eyes remain fixed on the island, smaller with every stroke of the oars, but, owing to that curious autumnal limpidity of the lagoons, not yet dimmed by the distance. The light, reflected by the shining mirror of water, strikes vividly upon the white or pink plaster of the battered houses, the orange of the tiles, the exquisite rose colour of the belfry that seems almost to sway, like the stalk of a flower, in the blue of the sky. The red and the white of the walls and brickwork, even that transparent pale blueness of sky, acquire in that light I know not what feathery, flaky, powdery look of being immaterial and unreal; as if those houses, those cupolas and belfries, those tall urn-shaped chimneys, were an intangible pastel, so much whitish and lilacky dust upon pink drawing-paper, rather than solid things of this solid world; so much so that the image mirrored in the lagoon seems more concrete than the real houses and real churches under the real sky.

Across the water there comes from Burano the sound of bells, the braying of the band in the principal square. For there are grand doings at Burano, and the fishing smacks, with their tawny sails furled and their brown

nets hung out in the sun, are moored side by side in the little port, with no one to heed them save the usual cur barking all day and all night. At the doors of the black kitchens, where brass and copper trenchers and pails shine out in the gloom, are seated the old women, sibyls or fates for Michelangelo, and the old fishermen wearing the scarlet condottiere's cap of the Renaissance, wrinkled and furrowed living terra-cottas and bronzes enough to make Donatello and Pollajolo gnash their teeth for envy. The old folks are surrounded by swarming little ones, beautiful creatures, more than half-naked, rolling about with the dogs and cats in the heaps of broken crockery, of tomato skins and pumpkin shells which form spots of vivid colour (and alas, of vivid stench) at the corners of the black lanes and on the steps of the dull green canals. While on the quays and in the square there moves the compact crowd of black or auburn heads of hair with hat on one side; of flowered cotton frocks pulled up to show the red stocking and the black clog, of veils and kerchiefs which hide, only the better to display, blonde waves of hair and dark eyes; of red fans held up by sun-

burnt hands; with here and there the tri-color plumes of the carabineers. And above it all, red and green spots upon the white of the houses, the blue of the sky, are the flags flying from the windows, the lanterns strung up for the illumination. The bells jangle: the band brays. The crowd shuffles, jostles, laughs, and swears; the vendors of fresh water and fried pumpkin, of candies spitted on wooden skewers, yell the praise of their wares. At the end of the square is a house with an extra amount of flags and lanterns, where gentlemen in tall hats are speechifying in good Italian, which nobody understands. The crowd laughs and swears; the band plays the duet of *Ruy Blas,* the potpourri of *Aïda,* and the royal march; the bells jangle louder than ever from the red belfry. The festivities are a grand success. Capital speeches have been made; a capital banquet will be given, with capital toasts; telegrams will be sent out in all directions — to Venice, to Rome, to the Minister of Public Instruction, to the Maestro Verdi, to everybody and anybody.

And all this fuss merely to commemorate the fact that a hundred and eighty years ago

"there saw the light" — as the biographers have it — "in Burano, an humble island of the lagoon," a certain man called Baldassare Galuppi.

After this would you have me believe that immortality is not always the reward of genius?

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Have you ever thought over the fate of forgotten melodies?

Our mind, if we attempt, proves unable to conceive of all those thousands and thousands of combinations of notes which were heard once upon a time, and are now heard no longer. Gone, disappeared. And whither? Vanished totally, like the sunset redness of yesterday, or last year's roses. The roses return, and so does the reddening sunset; but these other things, that were as lovely as they, do not. They have ceased to exist along with the recollection of the men and women in whose mind they had their sole real existence. The thought is strange and difficult to grasp. Yet there is something stranger still, and more difficult for our weak imagination to realize. It is the thought of all the minds in which those melodies were

once re-echoed; of all the hearts which, swept by them, shivered with pleasure or pain; of all that life, in short, which is now dead; of that present which has become the past, and by whose side, even while we are listening to the songs of to-day, there noiselessly takes its place this present of our own, becoming itself the past. The other arts, architecture, painting, sculpture, remain; besides they are always, so to speak, external to our life. Music alone exists absolutely in us who listen; nay, it has no existence apart from ours; and hence it is that music, like ourselves, must die.

That gallows-bird Villon, perhaps the first man to understand a certain kind of modern sentiment, wrote, as you know, an immortal ballad, in which he asked what had become of the famous women, the great empresses, and courtesans, and saints of former days, the ballad of dead ladies, whose melancholy refrain is an unanswerable question, "*Mais où sont les neiges d'antan?*"

As to me, I have often thought, that were I poet I would write a ballad sadder, sweeter, and more sceptical even than Villon's, which I should call the ballad of dead tunes.

Let your thoughts rest on it for a moment. There are two airs, for instance, neither of which a hundred years old, yet how forgotten: Cimarosa's *Quelle Pupille Tenere* and *Di Tanti Palpiti* in Rossini's Tancred; pieces once sung and whistled in every house and street through the length and breadth of Italy. Think what is meant by these pieces having once been familiar on all lips and in all ears, while now there is not one person in a thousand that knows their tune; in the case of Cimarosa's song, not one in a hundred thousand, since it has not had the luck, like *Di Tanti Palpiti,* of turning into a singing exercise for young ladies with a contralto voice. It means not only the death of the melodies themselves, of so much beauty, individuality, pleasure; but the death also of so many men and women who knew and loved those songs; the total severing of all tradition between ourselves and them. And thinking on this, I cannot but feel a great pathos about those two airs which have in them nothing pathetic. In those sighing horns of *Tancred* (before the famous phrase *"mi rivedrai, ti rivedro"*), in those shrilling trumpets that accompany the song of

Cimarosa, there is for me a whole peal of Requiem bells. Yet these songs are but two; behind, around them, how many forgotten songs? thousands and thousands; their ranks to be swelled by the melodies alive to-day. And thus on till the consummation of centuries.

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I am haunted by this thought, returning at sunset from those centenary festivities in honour of Galuppi, at which not a bar of Galuppi's music was to be heard. A melancholy fact? Nay, rather one to laugh about: the thing is too comic to have the dignity of sadness.

Immortality: well, if he wanted immortality, that good man of the eighteenth century, why he has got it. A commemorative slab was stuck on to his house to-day.

The sun has set behind a bank of ashy mist without any sunset glory. Burano is many miles behind us; and in front, grey upon the greyness of the waters, rises the faint profile of Venice, with its long serpentine lines of posts in the lagoon. All is grey; the water, the sky, the distant city, the yet more distant hills. But little by little there mingles with that greyness, in long cloud filaments, in the

sky, in wide patches like rose leaves on the water, a pale, palest rosiness. It is the colour of the dead melodies.

And while my eyes wander over the lagoon where the rose colour dies away in the grey, there sings in my memory a certain phrase of melody of exquisite beauty; and that phrase is part of Buranello's setting of the words, "*Se cerca, se dice.*" A melody found in a dusty portfolio in an archive, known therefore, perhaps, only by me. The thought is curious. Is it sad? Sad; but not without a certain something that pleases. Yes; I admit it: I am better pleased that this air should not be known to the good people at the festivities of Burano, nor to others. I alone know it. And I let it sing through my memory, while watching the faded rose colour that dies in the greyness of the sky and the greyness of the lagoon; the colour, as I said, of the forgotten songs.

VERNON LEE.

## A TOCCATA OF GALUPPI'S.

I.

Oh Galuppi, Baldassaro, this is very sad
to find!
I can hardly misconceive you; it would prove
me deaf and blind;
But although I take your meaning, 't is with
such a heavy mind!

II.

Here you come with your old music, and
here's all the good it brings.
What, they lived once thus at Venice where
the merchants were the kings,
Where Saint Mark's is, where the Doges
used to wed the sea with rings?

III.

Ay, because the sea's the street there; and
't is arched by . . . what you call
. . . Shylock's bridge with houses on it,
where they kept the carnival:
I was never out of England — it's as if I saw
it all.

IV.

Did young people take their pleasure when
the sea was warm in May?
Balls and masks begun at midnight, burning
ever to midday,
When they made up fresh adventures for the
morrow, do you say?

V.

Was a lady such a lady, cheeks so round and
lips so red,—
On her neck the small face buoyant, like a
bell-flower on its bed,
O'er the breast's superb abundance where a
man might base his head?

VI.

Well, and it was graceful of them — they'd
break talk off and afford
—She, to bite her mask's black velvet — he,
to finger on his sword,
While you sat and played Toccatas, stately
at the clavichord?

VII.

What? Those lesser thirds so plaintive, sixths diminished, sigh on sigh,
Told them something? Those suspensions, those solutions — "Must we die?"
Those commiserating sevenths — "Life might last! we can but try!"

VIII.

"Were you happy?"—"Yes."—"And are you still as happy?"—"Yes. And you?"
—"Then, more kisses!"—"Did *I* stop them, when a million seemed so few?"
Hark, the dominant's persistence till it must be answered to!

IX.

So, an octave struck the answer. Oh, they praised you, I dare say!
"Brave Galuppi! that was music! good alike at grave and gay!
"I can always leave off talking when I hear a master play!"

X.

Then they left you for their pleasure: till in due time, one by one,
Some with lives that came to nothing, some with deeds as well undone,
Death stepped tacitly and took them where they never see the sun.

XI.

But when I sit down to reason, think to take my stand nor swerve,
While I triumph o'er a secret wrung from nature's close reserve,
In you come with your cold music till I creep thro' every nerve.

XII.

Yes, you, like a ghostly cricket, creaking where a house was burned:
"Dust and ashes, dead and done with, Venice spent what Venice earned.
"The soul, doubtless, is immortal — where a soul can be discerned.

XIII.

"Yours for instance: you know physics, something of geology,
"Mathematics are your pastime; souls shall rise in their degree;
"Butterflies may dread extinction, — you'll not die, it cannot be!

XIV.

"As for Venice and her people, merely born to bloom and drop,
"Here on earth they bore their fruitage, mirth and folly were the crop:
"What of soul was left, I wonder, when the kissing had to stop?

XV.

"Dust and ashes!" So you creak it, and I want the heart to scold.
Dear dead women, with such hair, too — what's become of all the gold
Used to hang and brush their bosoms? I feel chilly and grown old.

ROBERT BROWNING.

We see the solemn shade of Galuppi in the dusk of the dimly-lighted room, we hear his mocking gibe. His music has lived indeed, lived to breathe its message afresh to human ears and human hearts, but not so with the gay pageants of Venice. We hear the hollow, taunting tone of the *maestro* as he accuses the hapless scholar of taking "mathematics as a pastime,"— a withering accusation, this. Nor does the prospect of an eternity of "physics and geology," and even *that* held out as a very doubtful matter, succeed in cheering the man of science. The grey shadow clings to him — the chill of his loveless age makes his nerves creep. He dimly suspects that it had perhaps been better and lovelier to "bloom and drop;" he doubts whether, after all, his ideal of later life, his scientific research, be actually more worthy, more noble, more fitted to enjoy immortal existence, that the life of the senses, the warm night of May, the perfumed breeze, the kiss, the whisper, the thrill of music and the mazy dance! Ah! those faces of heavenly fairness peering out of the gloom, those rose-lips, those shining eyes of fire, those thickly meshed braids of gold hair, those soft caressing tones — all lost — all fled — all gone! *"Qui sait où s'en vont les roses?"*

MRS. ALEXANDER IRELAND.

# The Bibelot

RICHARD JEFFERIES *was born at Coate Farm, Wiltshire, November 6, 1848, and died, after five years of almost continuous suffering, August 14, 1887.*

*His early work betrayed few signs of promise: his later work gave perfect expression to that old bucolic life and nature-worship never wholly absent from the world's literature in any age, and with Jefferies seen even in the felicity of mere title-pages,—'The Dewy Morn', 'Amaryllis at the Fair', 'A Pageant of Summer'.*

*Two books about this man, may be read with profit: Sir Walter Besant's* Eulogy, *(1888), and a shorter* Study, *by Mr. H. S. Salt (1894). For so young a writer, coming so late into possession of his powers, he has left a matchless record in English letters; a record that will remain when much of brilliant impermanence is forgotten.*

'The Story of My Heart' *(1883), is purely an autobiography of the spirit; say*

*indeed, an affirmation, not of the flesh but of the mystery become clear to him of the natural body raised up a spiritual body. That this testimony has been misunderstood is quite possible. 'You may read in it, if you will, the abandonment, rather than the loss, of his early faith; you cannot read in it, but you shall hear . . . how he found it again.'*

*There is, then, in this matured work of Richard Jefferies a new sense of tears and joy in things earthly and things eternal. He has sought out and laid hold upon a truth that no man, as a finality, can gainsay; and his* 'Story' *becomes a revelation of the steps taken by the soul that despite the storms of illusion led him from the first to seek God; and at the last to abide in Him.*

SENTENCES FROM
THE STORY OF MY HEART
*by*
RICHARD JEFFERIES.

*" Dim woodlands made him wiser far*
*Than those who thresh their barren thought*
*With flails of knowledge dearly bought,*
*Till all his soul shone like a star*
*That flames at fringe of Heaven's bar,*
*There breaks the surf of space unseen*
*Against Hope's veil that lies between*
*Love's future and the woes that are.*

*" His soul saw through the weary years—*
*Past war-bells' chimes and poor men's tears—*
*That day when Time shall bring to birth*
*(By many a heart whose hope seems vain,*
*And many a fight where Love slays Pain)*
*True Freedom, come to reign on earth."*

H. H. VON STURMER.

"Go", said the Voice which dismisses the soul on its way to inhabit an earthly frame. "Go; thy lot shall be to speak of trees, from the cedar even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; and of beasts also, and of fowls, and of fishes. All thy ways shall be ordered for thee, so that thou shalt learn to speak of these things as no man ever spoke before. Thou shalt rise into great honour among men. Many shall love to hear thy voice above all the voices of those who speak. This is a great gift. Thou shalt also enjoy the tender love of wife and children. Yet the things which men desire most — riches, rank, independence, ease, health, and long life — these are denied to thee. Thou shalt be always poor; thou shalt live in humble places; the goad of necessity shall continually prick thee to work when thou wouldst meditate; to write when thou wouldst walk forth to observe. Thou shalt never be able to sit down to rest; thou shalt be afflicted with grievous plaguy diseases; and thou shalt die when little more than half the allotted life of man is past. Go, therefore. Be happy with what is given, and lament not over what is denied."

WALTER BESANT:
*The Eulogy of Richard Jefferies.*

Tottenham Church

*From the painting by John Constable*

In their common love of nature and, their absorption in pastoral scenes, Constable and Richard Jeffries were spiritually akin. Of the genius of both there is no question. That Constable founded "the school of faithful landscape" is universally recognized, and the artist himself would scarcely have wished for a higher title to immortality. His "Tottenham Church," exemplifies his assertion that "I have always succeeded best with my native scenes."

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

## THE STORY OF MY HEART.

THE story of my heart commences seventeen years ago. In the glow of youth there were times every now and then when I felt the necessity of a strong inspiration of soul-thought. My heart was dusty, parched for want of the rain of deep feeling; my mind arid and dry, for there is a dust which settles on the heart as well as that which falls on a ledge.

There was a hill to which I used to resort at such periods. The labour of walking three miles to it, all the while gradually ascending, seemed to clear my blood of the heaviness accumulated at home. On a warm summer day the slow continued rise required continual effort, which carried away the sense of oppression. The familiar everyday scene was soon out of sight; I came to other trees, meadows, and fields; I began to breathe a new air and to have a fresher aspiration.

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Moving up the sweet short turf, at every step my heart seemed to obtain a wider horizon of feeling; with every inhalation of rich pure air, a deeper desire. The very light of the sun was whiter and more brilliant here. By the time I had reached the sum-

mit I had entirely forgotten the petty circumstances and the annoyances of existence. I felt myself, myself. There was an intrenchment on the summit, and going down into the fosse I walked round it slowly to recover breath. On the south-western side there was a spot where the outer bank had partially slipped, leaving a gap. There the view was over a broad plain, beautiful with wheat, and inclosed by a perfect amphitheatre of green hills. Through these hills there was one narrow groove, or pass, southwards, where the white clouds seemed to close in the horizon. Woods hid the scattered hamlets and farmhouses, so that I was quite alone.

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Sometimes on lying down on the sward I first looked up at the sky, gazing for a long time till I could see deep into the azure and my eyes were full of the colour; then I turned my face to the grass and thyme, placing my hands at each side of my face so as to shut out everything and hide myself. Having drunk deeply of the heaven above and felt the most glorious beauty of the day, and remembering the old, old sea, which (as

it seemed to me) was but just yonder at the edge, I now became lost, and absorbed into the being or existence of the universe. I felt down deep into the earth under, and high above into the sky, and farther still to the sun and stars. Still farther beyond the stars into the hollow of space, and losing thus my separateness of being came to seem like a part of the whole. Then I whispered to the earth beneath, through the grass and thyme, down into the depth of its ear, and again up to the starry space hid behind the blue of day. Travelling in an instant across the distant sea, I saw as if with actual vision the palms and cocoanut trees, the bamboos of India, and the cedars of the extreme south. Like a lake with islands the ocean lay before me, as clear and vivid as the plain beneath in the midst of the amphitheatre of hills.

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Sometimes I went to a deep, narrow valley in the hills, silent and solitary. The sky crossed from side to side, like a roof supported on two walls of green. Sparrows chirped in the wheat at the verge above, their calls falling like the twittering of swal-

lows from the air. There was no other sound. The short grass was dried grey as it grew by the heat; the sun hung over the narrow vale as if it had been put there by hand. Burning, burning, the sun glowed on the sward at the foot of the slope where these thoughts burned into me. How many, many years, how many cycles of years, how many bundles of cycles of years, had the sun glowed down thus on that hollow? Since it was formed how long? Since it was worn and shaped, groove-like, in the flanks of the hills by mighty forces which had ebbed. Alone with the sun which glowed on the work when it was done, I saw back through space to the old time of tree-ferns, of the lizard flying through the air, the lizard-dragon wallowing in sea foam, the mountainous creatures, twice-elephantine, feeding on land; all the crooked sequence of life. The dragon-fly which passed me traced a continuous descent from the fly marked on stone in those days. The immense time lifted me like a wave rolling under a boat; my mind seemed to raise itself as the swell of the cycles came; it felt strong with the power of the ages.

It happened just afterwards that I went to Pevensey, and immediately the ancient wall swept my mind back seventeen hundred years to the eagle, the pilum, and the short sword. The grey stones, the thin red bricks laid by those whose eyes had seen Cæsar's Rome, lifted me out of the grasp of house-life, of modern civilisation, of those minutiæ which occupy the moment. The grey stone made me feel as if I had existed from then till now, so strongly did I enter into and see my own life as if reflected. My own existence was focussed back on me; I saw its joy, its unhappiness, its birth, its death, its possibilities among the infinite, above all its yearning Question. Why? Seeing it thus clearly, and lifted out of the moment by the force of seventeen centuries, I recognised the full mystery and the depth of things in the roots of the dry grass on the wall, in the green sea flowing near. Is there anything I can do? The mystery and the possibilities are not in the roots of the grass, nor is the depth of things in the sea; they are in my existence, in my soul. The marvel of existence, almost the terror of it, was flung on me with

rushing force by the sea, the sun shining, the distant hills. With all their ponderous weight they made me feel myself: all the time, all the centuries made me feel myself this moment a hundred-fold. I determined that I would endeavour to write what I had so long thought of, and the same evening put down one sentence. There the sentence remained two years. I tried to carry it on; I hesitated because I could not express it: nor can I now, though in desperation I am throwing these rude stones of thought together, rude as those of the ancient wall.

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There were grass-grown tumuli on the hills to which of old I used to walk, sit down at the foot of one of them, and think. Some warrior had been interred there in the ante-historic times. The sun of the summer morning shone on the dome of sward, and the air came softly up from the wheat below, the tips of the grasses swayed as it passed sighing faintly, it ceased, and the bees hummed by to the thyme and heathbells. I became absorbed in the glory of the day, the sunshine, the sweet air, the yellowing corn turning from its sappy green

to summer's noon of gold, the lark's song like a waterfall in the sky. I felt at that moment that I was like the spirit of the man whose body was interred in the tumulus; I could understand and feel his existence the same as my own.

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Sweetly the summer air came up to the tumulus, the grass sighed softly, the butterflies went by, sometimes alighting on the green dome. Two thousand years! Summer after summer the blue butterflies had visited the mound, the thyme had flowered, the wind sighed in the grass. The azure morning had spread its arms over the low tomb; and full glowing noon burned on it; the purple of sunset rosied the sward. Stars, ruddy in the vapour of the southern horizon, beamed at midnight through the mystic summer night, which is dusky and yet full of light. White mists swept up and hid it; dews rested on the turf; tender harebells drooped; the wings of the finches fanned the air — finches whose colours faded from the wings how many centuries ago! Brown autumn dwelt in the woods beneath; the rime of winter whitened the beech clump on the

ridge; again the buds came on the wind-blown hawthorn bushes, and in the evening the broad constellation of Orion covered the east. Two thousand times! Two thousand times the woods grew green, and ring-doves built their nests. Day and night for two thousand years — light and shadow sweeping over the mound — two thousand years of labour by day and slumber by night. Mystery gleaming in the stars, pouring down in the sunshine, speaking in the night, the wonder of the sun and of far space, for twenty centuries round about this low and green-grown dome.

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My soul has never been, and never can be, dipped in time. Time has never existed, and never will; it is a purely artificial arrangement. It is eternity now, it always was eternity, and always will be. By no possible means could I get into time if I tried. I am in eternity now and must there remain. Haste not, be at rest, this Now is eternity. Because the idea of time has left my mind — if ever it had any hold on it — to me the man interred in the tumulus is living now as I live. We are both in eternity.

I want more ideas of soul-life. I am certain that there are more yet to be found. A great life — an entire civilisation — lies just outside the pale of common thought. Cities and countries, inhabitants, intelligences, culture — an entire civilisation. Except by illustrations drawn from familiar things, there is no way of indicating a new idea. I do not mean actual cities, actual civilisation. Such life is different from any yet imagined. A nexus of ideas exists of which nothing is known — a vast system of ideas — a cosmos of thought. There is an Entity, a Soul-Entity, as yet unrecognised. These, rudely expressed, constitute my Fourth Idea. It is beyond, or beside, the three discovered by the Cavemen; it is in addition to the existence of the soul; in addition to immortality; and beyond the idea of the deity. I think there is something more than existence.

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Twelve thousand years since the Caveman stood at the mouth of his cavern and gazed out at the night and the stars. He looked again and saw the sun rise beyond the sea. He reposed in the noontide heat under the shade of the trees, he closed his eyes and looked

into himself. He was face to face with the earth, the sun, the night; face to face with himself. There was nothing between; no wall of written tradition; no built-up system of culture — his naked mind was confronted by naked earth. He made three idea-discoveries, wresting them from the unknown: the existence of his soul, immortality, the deity. Now, to-day, as I write, I stand in exactly the same position as the Caveman. Written tradition, systems of culture, modes of thought, have for me no existence. If ever they took any hold of my mind it must have been very slight; they have long ago been erased.

From earth and sea and sun, from night, the stars, from day, the trees, the hills, from my own soul — from these I think. I stand this moment at the mouth of the ancient cave, face to face with nature, face to face with the supernatural, with myself. My naked mind confronts the unknown. I see as clearly as the noonday that this is not all; I see other and higher conditions than existence; I see not only the existence of the soul, immortality, but, in addition, I realise a soul-life illimitable; I realise the existence of

a cosmos of thought; I realise the existence of an inexpressible entity infinitely higher than deity. I strive to give utterance to a Fourth Idea. The very idea that there is another idea is something gained. The three found by the Cavemen are but stepping-stones: first links of an endless chain. At the mouth of the ancient cave, face to face with the unknown, they prayed. Prone in heart to-day I pray, Give me the deepest soul-life.

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I always stepped aside, too, to look awhile at the head of Julius Cæsar. The domes of the swelling temples of his broad head are full of mind, evident to the eye as a globe is full of substance to the sense of feeling in the hands that hold it. The thin worn cheek is entirely human; endless difficulties surmounted by endless labour are marked in it, as the sandblast, by dint of particles ceaselessly driven, carves the hardest material. If circumstances favoured him he made those circumstances his own by marvellous labour, so as justly to receive the credit of chance. Therefore the thin cheek is entirely human — the sum of human life made visible

in one face — labour, and endurance, and mind, and all in vain. A shadow of deep sadness has gathered on it in the years that have passed, because endurance was without avail. It is sadder to look at than the grass-grown tumulus I used to sit by, because it is a personality, and also on account of the extreme folly of our human race ever destroying our greatest.

Far better had they endeavoured, however hopelessly, to keep him living till this day. Did but the race this hour possess one-hundredth part of this breadth of view, how happy for them! Of whom else can it be said that he had no enemies to forgive because he recognised no enemy? Nineteen hundred years ago he put in actual practice, with more arbitrary power than any despot, those very principles of humanity which are now put forward as the highest culture. But he made them to be actual things under his sway.

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There is a place in front of the Royal Exchange where the wide pavement reaches out like a promontory. It is in the shape of a triangle with a rounded apex. A stream

of traffic runs on either side, and other streets send their currents down into the open space before it.

Now the streams slacken, and now they rush amain, but never cease; dark waves are always rolling down the incline opposite, waves swell out from the side rivers, all London converges into this focus. There is an indistinguishable noise — it is not clatter, hum, or roar, it is not resolvable; made up of a thousand thousand footsteps, from a thousand hoofs, a thousand wheels — of haste, and shuffle, and quick movements, and ponderous loads; no attention can resolve it into a fixed sound.

This is the vortex and whirlpool, the center of human life to-day on the earth. Now the tide rises and now it sinks, but the flow of these rivers always continues. Here it seethes and whirls, not for an hour only, but for all present time, hour by hour, day by day, year by year.

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In ancient times, Xerxes, the king of kings, looking down upon his myriads, wept to think that in a hundred years not one of them would be left. Where will be these

millions of to-day in a hundred years? But, further than that, let us ask, Where then will be the sum and outcome of their labour? If they wither away like summer grass, will not at least a result be left which those of a hundred years hence may be the better for? No, not one jot! There will not be any sum or outcome or result of this ceaseless labour and movement; it vanishes in the moment that it is done, and in a hundred years nothing will be there, for nothing is there now. There will be no more sum or result than accumulates from the motion of a revolving cowl on a housetop. Nor do they receive any more sunshine during their lives, for they are unconscious of the sun.

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Is there any theory, philosophy, or creed, is there any system or culture, any formulated method able to meet and satisfy each separate item of this agitated pool of human life? By which they may be guided, by which hope, by which look forward? Not a mere illusion of the craving heart — something real, as real as the solid walls of fact against which, like drifted seaweed, they are dashed; something to give each separate personality

sunshine and a flower in its own existence now; something to shape this million-handed labour to an end and outcome that will leave more sunshine and more flowers to those who must succeed? Something real now, and not in the spirit-land; in this hour now, as I stand and the sun burns. Can any creed, philosophy, system, or culture endure the test and remain unmolten in this fierce focus of human life?

Consider, is there anything slowly painted on the once mystic and now commonplace papyri of ancient, ancient Egypt, held on the mummy's withered breast? In that elaborate ritual, in the procession of the symbols, in the winged circle, in the laborious sarcophagus? Nothing; absolutely nothing!

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What is in Assyria? There are sand, and failing rivers, and in Assyria's writings an utter nothing. The aged caves of India, who shall tell when they were sculptured? Far back when the sun was burning, burning in the sky as now in untold precedent time. Is there any meaning in those ancient caves? The indistinguishable noise not to be

resolved, born of the human struggle, mocks in answer.

From the various forms of Semitic, Aryan, or Turanian creed now existing, from the printing-press to the palm-leaf volume on to those who call on the jewel in the lotus, can aught be gathered which can face this, the Reality? The indistinguishable noise, non-resolvable, roars a loud contempt.

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Above the indistinguishable roar of the many feet I feel the presence of the sun, of the immense forces of the universe, and beyond these the sense of the eternal now, of the immortal. Full well aware that all has failed, yet, side by side with the sadness of that knowledge, there lives on in me an unquenchable belief, thought burning like the sun, that there is yet something to be found, something real, something to give each separate personality sunshine and flowers in its own existence now. Something to shape this million-handed labour to an end and outcome, leaving accumulated sunshine and flowers to those who shall succeed. It must be dragged forth by might of thought from the immense forces of the universe.

That I might but have a fragment of Cæsar's intellect to find a fragment of this desire!

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My heart looks back and sympathises with all the joy and life of ancient time. With the circling dance burned in still attitude on the vase; with the chase and the hunter eagerly pursuing, whose javelin trembles to be thrown; with the extreme fury of feeling, the whirl of joy in the warriors from Marathon to the last battle of Rome, not with the slaughter, but with the passion — the life in the passion; with the garlands and the flowers; with all the breathing busts that have panted beneath the sun. O beautiful human life! Tears come in my eyes as I think of it. So beautiful, so inexpressibly beautiful!

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The most extraordinary spectacle, as it seems to me, is the vast expenditure of labour and time wasted in obtaining mere subsistence.

The labour and time of ten generations, properly directed, would sustain a hundred generations succeeding to them, and that,

too, with so little self-denial on the part of the providers as to be scarcely felt.

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In twelve thousand written years the world has not yet built itself a House, nor filled a Granary, nor organised itself for its own comfort. It is so marvellous I cannot express the wonder with which it fills me.

I verily believe that the earth in one year produces enough food to last for thirty. Why, then, have we not enough? Why do people die of starvation, or lead a miserable existence on the verge of it? Why have millions upon millions to toil from morning to evening just to gain a mere crust of bread? Because of the absolute lack of organisation by which such labour should produce its effect, the absolute lack of distribution, the absolute lack even of the very idea that such things are possible. Nay, even to mention such things, to say that they are possible, is criminal with many. Madness could hardly go farther.

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Food and drink, roof and clothes, are the inalienable right of every child born into the light. If the world does not provide it

freely — not as a grudging gift but as a right, as a son of the house sits down to breakfast — then is the world mad. But the world is not mad, only in ignorance — an interested ignorance, kept up by strenuous exertions, from which infernal darkness it will, in course of time, emerge, marvelling at the past as a man wonders at and glories in the light who has escaped from blindness.

I hope succeeding generations will be able to be idle. I hope that nine-tenths of their time will be leisure time; that they may enjoy their days, and the earth, and the beauty of this beautiful world; that they may rest by the sea and dream; that they may dance and sing, and eat and drink. I will work towards that end with all my heart.

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A river runs itself clear during the night, and in sleep thought becomes pellucid. All the hurrying to and fro, the unrest and stress, the agitation and confusion subside. Like a sweet pure spring, thought pours forth to meet the light, and is illumined to its depths. The dawn at my window ever causes a desire for larger thought, the recognition of the light at the moment of waking kindles

afresh the wish for a broad day of the mind. There is a certainty that there are yet ideas further, and greater — that there is still a limitless beyond. I know at that moment that there is no limit to the things that may be yet in material and tangible shape besides the immaterial perceptions of the soul. The dim white light of the dawn speaks it. This prophet, which has come with its wonders to the bedside of every human being for so many thousands of years, faces me once again with the upheld finger of light. Where is the limit to that physical sign?

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So great is the value of the soul that it seems to me, if the soul lived and received its aspirations it would not matter if the material universe melted away as snow. Many turn aside the instant the soul is mentioned, and I sympathise with them in one sense; they fear lest, if they acknowledge it, they will be fettered by mediæval conditions. My contention is that the restrictions of the mediæval era should entirely be cast into oblivion, but the soul recognised and employed. Instead of slurring over the soul I desire to see it at its highest perfection.

I have been obliged to write these things by an irresistible impulse which has worked in me since early youth. They have not been written for the sake of argument, still less for any thought of profit, rather indeed the reverse. They have been forced from me by earnestness of heart, and they express my most serious convictions.

I was not more than eighteen when an inner and esoteric meaning began to come to me from all the visible universe, and indefinable aspirations filled me. I found them in the grass fields, under the trees, on the hill-tops, at sunrise, and in the night. There was a deeper meaning everywhere. The sun burned with it, the broad front of morning beamed with it; a deep feeling entered me while gazing at the sky in the azure noon, and in the star-lit evening.

Sweet is the bitter sea by the shore where the faint blue pebbles are lapped by the green-grey wave, where the wind-quivering foam is loth to leave the lashed stone. Sweet is the bitter sea, and the clear green in which the gaze seeks the soul, looking through the glass into itself. The sea thinks for me as I listen and ponder: the sea

thinks, and every boom of the wave repeats my prayer.

Sometimes I stay on the wet sands as the tide rises, listening to the rush of the lines of foam in layer upon layer; the wash swells and circles about my feet, I lave my hands in it, I lift a little in my hollowed palm, I take the life of the sea to me. My soul rising to the immensity utters its desire-prayer with all the strength of the sea. Or, again, the full stream of ocean beats upon the shore, and the rich wind feeds the heart, the sun burns brightly; the sense of soul-life burns in me like a torch.

Leaving the shore I walk among the trees; a cloud passes, and the sweet short rain comes mingled with sunbeams and flower-scented air. The finches sing among the fresh green leaves of the beeches. Beautiful it is, in summer days, to see the wheat wave, and the long grass foam-flecked of flower yield and return to the wind. My soul of itself always desires; these are to it as fresh food. I have found in the hills another valley grooved in prehistoric times, where, climbing to the top of the hollow, I can see the sea. Down in the hollow I look up; the sky

stretches over, the sun burns as it seems but just above the hill, and the wind sweeps onward. As the sky extends beyond the valley, so I know that there are ideas beyond the valley of my thought; I know that there is something infinitely higher than deity. The great sun burning in the sky, the sea, the firm earth, all the stars of night are feeble — all, all the cosmos is feeble; it is not strong enough to utter my prayer-desire. My soul cannot reach to its full desire of prayer. I need no earth, or sea, or sun to hink my thought. If my thought-part — the psyche — were entirely separated from the body, and from the earth, I should of myself desire the same. In itself my soul desires; my existence, my soul-existence is in itself my prayer, and so long as it exists so long will it pray that I may have the fullest soul-life.

OF old, old time the classic women in the 'Violet Land' of Greece went out to the sunrise, and, singing to Apollo, the sun, prayed that their hearts might be satisfied, and their homes secured; by the fountain they asked of the water that the highest aspirations of their souls might be fulfilled; of the earth they asked an abundance for those whom they loved. No more the hymn is heard to the sun; no more the stream murmurs in an undertone to the chorus of human hopes; no more the earth sees its wheat and its flowers taken from it to be presented to it again upon the altar in token of gratitude and prayer. But still the larks, as then, and still the thrushes, the fleeting swallows, and the doves, address themselves to sun, and earth, and stream, and heaven. Their songs vary not, their creed does not change, their prayer goes forth to the same old gods.

'THE DEWY MORN.'

# The Bibelot

*It was at the period of these lyrics by Lorenzo de' Medici and Angelo Poliziano that the Renaissance reached its marvellous culmination. The cycle of Dante with its prelude of Wandering Student singers, had closed, — the vision of* La Vita Nuova *become dim. As yet, however, the great revival of learning had not spent its force, nor the golden colours of its art faded from the morning sky.*

*These songs of dead Florentines,* — a mere hansel of blossoms from the Hesperidian tree, — may well open with Tasso's passionate ode. Later in point of time, it is a splendid redaction of all that mighty age portended, when, after a century's*

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* *The title of the present number, announced in March, was changed, after consideration, as too inconclusive. With the exception of Tasso's ode, and Guarini's lines, these translations are taken from Symonds: Renaissance in Italy (vol. iv. ch. vi) and Sketches and Studies in Italy (pp. 190-225).*

*recession, nought remained of Italian nationality save its imperishable memory.*

*As fittingly may we close our little book with Guarini's incomparably tender lyric cry,* —

'O Primavera, gioventù de l' anno.'

*When this had been uttered we are henceforth bidden 'to fresh woods and pastures new';* — *the night that cometh had crept in upon the revellers,* — *the day-star of a greater literature had arisen in another and greater land.*

# SONGS
# *of*
# DEAD FLORENTINES.

*"No songs thou'lt own*
*In the dim land where all things are forgot."*

THEOCRITUS: IDYL I.

"LORENZO DE' MEDICI and Angelo Poliziano re-united the two currents of Italian literature, plebeian and cultivated, by giving the form of refined art to popular lyrics of divers kinds."

"Little did Poliziano dream that his learning would pass away almost unreckoned, but that men of after time would gather the honey of the golden days of the Renaissance from these wilding garlands."

"The versatility of Lorenzo's talent showed itself . . . when he gave a free rein to his fancy in the composition of *Ballate* and Carnival Songs. . . . In Carnival time it was the custom of the Florentines to walk the streets, masked and singing satiric ballads. . . . Beautiful maidens, young men in rich clothes on prancing steeds, showers of lilies and violets, triumphal arches of spring flowers and ribbons, hailstorms of comfits, torches flaring to the sallow evening sky. . . . The air rings with music as they come, bass and tenor and shrill treble mingling with the sound of lute and cymbal. . . . Gradually it dies away in the distance, fainter and more faintly still the treble floats to us in broken waifs of sound—the echo of a lyric heard in dreams."

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

(*Renaissance in Italy, Vol. IV, Ch. VI.*)

## ODE TO THE GOLDEN AGE.

TORQUATO TASSO.

1544 — 1595

"The divine ode on the Golden Age, the crown of all pastoral aspiration. That, indeed, carries everything, even truth itself, before it; saving the truth of man's longing after a state of happiness compatible with his desires. The first line of it, the most beautiful of sighs, is familiar as a proverb in the lips of Italy, and of the lovers of Italy:—

*O bella età de l'oro"*

LEIGH HUNT.

O LOVELY age of gold!
Not that the rivers rolled
With milk, or that the woods dropped honey-dew;
Not that the ready ground
Produced without a wound,
Or the mild serpent had no tooth that slew;
Not that a cloudless blue
Forever was in sight,
Or that the heaven which burns,
And now is cold by turns,
Looked out in glad and everlasting light;
No, nor that even the insolent ships from far
Brought war to no new lands, nor riches worse than war:

But solely that that vain
And breath-invented pain,
That idol of mistake, that worshipped cheat,

That Honour, — since so called
By vulgar minds appalled,
Played not the tyrant with our nature yet.
It had not come to fret
The sweet and happy fold
Of gentle human-kind;
Nor did its hard law bind
Souls nursed in freedom; but that law of gold,
That glad and golden law, all free, all fitted,
Which Nature's own hand wrote — What pleases, is
permitted.

Then among streams and flowers,
The little winged Powers
Went singing carols without torch or bow;
The nymphs and shepherds sat
Mingling with innocent chat
Sports and low whispers; and with whispers low,
Kisses that would not go.
The maiden budding o'er,
Kept not her bloom uneyed,
Which now a veil must hide,
Nor the crisp apples which her bosom bore;
And oftentimes, in river or in lake,
The lover and his love their merry bath would take.

'Twas thou, thou, Honour, first
That didst deny our thirst
Its drink, and on the fount thy covering set;

Thou bad'st kind eyes withdraw
Into constrained awe,
And keep the secret for their tears to wet;
Thou gatheredst in a net
The tresses from the air,
And mad'st the sports and plays
Turn all to sullen ways,
And putt'st on speech a rein, in steps a care.
Thy work it is, — thou shade that wilt not move,
That what was once the gift, is now the theft of Love.

Our sorrows and our pains,
These are thy noble gains.
But oh, thou Love's and Nature's masterer,
Thou conqueror of the crowned,
What dost thou on this ground,
Too small a circle for thy mighty sphere?
Go, and make slumber dear
To the renowned and high;
We here, a lowly race,
Can live without thy grace,
After the use of mild antiquity.
Go, let us love; since years
No truce allow, and life soon disappears;
Go, let us love; the daylight dies, is born;
But unto us the light
Dies once for all, and sleep brings on eternal night.

## THREE BALLATE.

ANGELO POLIZIANO.

1454 — 1494

### I.

I FOUND myself one day all, all alone,
For pastime in a field with blossoms strewn.

I do not think the world a field could show
With herbs of perfume so surpassing rare;
But when I passed beyond the green hedge-row,
A thousand flowers around me flourished fair,
White, pied and crimson, in the summer air;
Among the which I heard a sweet bird's tone.

I found myself one day all, all alone,
For pastime in a field with blossoms strewn.

Her song it was so tender and so clear
That all the world listened with love; then I
With stealthy feet a-tiptoe drawing near,
Her golden head and golden wings could spy,
Her plumes that flashed like rubies 'neath the sky,
Her crystal beak and throat and bosom's zone.

I found myself one day all, all alone,
For pastime in a field with blossoms strewn.

Fain would I snare her, smit with mighty love;
  But arrow-like she soared, and through the air
Fled to her nest upon the boughs above;
  Wherefore to follow her is all my care,
  For haply I might lure her by some snare
Forth from the woodland wild where she is flown.

I found myself one day all, all alone,
For pastime in a field with blossoms strewn.

Yea, I might spread some net or woven wile;
  But since of singing she doth take such pleasure,
Without or other art or other guile
  I seek to win her with a tuneful measure;
  Therefore in singing spend I all my leisure,
To make by singing this sweet bird my own.

I found myself one day all, all alone,
For pastime in a field with blossoms strewn.

## II.

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

From Myrrha's eyes there flieth, girt with fire,
An angel of our lord, a laughing boy,
Who lights in frozen hearts a flaming pyre,
And with such sweetness doth the soul destroy,
That while it dies, it murmurs forth its joy:
Oh blessed am I to dwell in Paradise!

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

From Myrrha's eyes a virtue still doth move,
So swift and with so fierce and strong a flight,
That it is like the lightning of high Jove,
Riving of iron and adamant the might;
Nathless the wound doth carry such delight
That he who suffers dwells in Paradise.

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

From Myrrha's eyes a lovely messenger
  Of joy so grave, so virtuous, doth flee,
That all proud souls are bound to bend to her
  So sweet her countenance, it turns the key
  Of hard hearts locked in cold security:
Forth flies the prisoned soul to Paradise.

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

In Myrrha's eyes beauty doth but make her throne,
  And sweetly smile and sweetly speak her mind:
Such grace in her fair eyes a man hath known
  As in the whole wide world he scarce may find:
  Yet if she slay him with a glance too kind,
He lives again beneath her gazing eyes.

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

## III.

I WENT a roaming, maidens, one bright day,
In a green garden in mid month of May.

Violets and lilies grew on every side
Mid the green grass, and the young flowers wonderful,
Golden and white and red and azure-eyed;
Toward which I stretched my hands, eager to pull
Plenty to make my fair curls beautiful,
To crown my rippling curls with garlands gay.

I went a roaming, maidens, one bright day,
In a green garden in mid month of May.

But when my lap was full of flowers I spied
Roses at last, roses of every hue;
Therefore I ran to pluck their ruddy pride,
Because their perfume was so sweet and true
That all my soul went forth with pleasure new,
With yearning and desire too soft to say.

I went a roaming, maidens, one bright day,
In a green garden in mid month of May.

I gazed and gazed. Hard task it were to tell
How lovely were the roses in that hour:
One was but peeping from her verdant shell,
And some were faded, some were scarce in flower:
Then Love said: Go, pluck from the blooming bower
Those that thou seest ripe upon the spray.

I went a roaming, maidens, one bright day,
In a green garden in mid month of May.

For when the full rose quits her tender sheath,
When she is sweetest and most fair to see,
Then is the time to place her in thy wreath,
Before her beauty and her freshness flee.
Gather ye therefore roses with great glee,
Sweet girls, or e'er their perfume pass away.

I went a roaming, maidens, one bright day,
In a green garden in mid month of May.

## MAY-DAY SONG.

ANGELO POLIZIANO.

WELCOME in the May
And the woodland garland gay!

Welcome in the jocund spring
Which bids all men lovers be!
Maidens, up with carolling,
With your sweethearts stout and free,
With roses and with blossoms ye
Who deck yourselves this first of May!

Up, and forth into the pure
Meadows, mid the trees and flowers!
Every beauty is secure
With so many bachelors:
Beasts and birds amid the bowers
Burn with love this first of May.

Maidens, who are young and fair,
Be not harsh, I counsel you;
For your youth cannot repair
Her prime of spring, as meadows do:
None be proud, but all be true
To men who love, this first of May.

Dance and carol every one
  Of our band so bright and gay!
See your sweethearts how they run
  Through the jousts for you to-day!
  She who saith her lover nay,
Will deflower the sweets of May.

Lads in love take sword and shield
  To make pretty girls their prize:
Yield ye, merry maidens, yield
  To your lovers' vows and sighs:
  Give his heart back ere it dies:
Wage not war this first of May.

He who steals another's heart,
  Let him give his own heart too:
Who's the robber? 'Tis the smart
  Little cherub Cupid, who
  Homage comes to pay with you,
Damsels, to the first of May.

Love comes smiling; round his head
  Lilies white and roses meet:
'Tis for you his flight is sped.
  Fair one, haste our king to greet:
  Who will fling him blossoms sweet
Soonest on this first of May?

Welcome, stranger! welcome, king!
  Love, what hast thou to command?
That each girl with wreaths should ring
  Her lover's hair with loving hand,
  That girls small and great should band
In Love's ranks this first of May.

## CHORUS OF MAENADS.

ANGELO POLIZIANO.

BACCHUS! we all must follow thee!
Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohé! Ohé!

With ivy coronals, bunch and berry,
Crown we our heads to worship thee!
Thou hast bidden us to make merry
Day and night with jollity!
Drink then! Bacchus is here! Drink free,
And hand ye the drinking-cup to me!
Bacchus! we all must follow thee!
Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohé! Ohé!

See, I have emptied my horn already:
Stretch hither your beaker to me, I pray:
Are the hills and the lawns where we roam unsteady?
Or is it my brain that reels away?
Let every one run to and fro through the hay,
As ye see me run! Ho! after me!
Bacchus! we all must follow thee!
Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohé! Ohé!

Methinks I am dropping in swoon or slumber:
Am I drunken or sober, yes or no?
What are these weights my feet encumber?
You too are tipsy, well I know!

Let every one do as ye see me do,
Let every one drink and quaff like me!
Bacchus! we all must follow thee!
Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohé! Ohé!

Cry Bacchus! Cry Bacchus! Be blithe and merry,
Tossing wine down your throats away!
Let sleep then come and our gladness bury:
Drink you, and you, and you, while ye may!
Dancing is over for me to-day.
Let every one cry aloud Evohé!
Bacchus! we all must follow thee!
Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohé! Ohé!

## THREE LYRICS.

LORENZO DE' MEDICI.

1448 — 1492

### I.

INTO a little close of mine I went
One morning, when the sun with his fresh light
Was rising all refulgent and unshent.
Rose-trees are planted there in order bright,
Whereto I turned charmed eyes, and long did stay,
Taking my fill of that new-found delight.
Red and white roses bloomed upon the spray;
One opened, leaf by leaf, to greet the morn,
Shyly at first, then in sweet disarray;
Another, yet a youngling, newly born,
Scarce struggled from the bud, and there were some
Whose petals closed them from the air forlorn;
Another fell, and showered the grass with bloom;
Thus I beheld the roses dawn and die,
And one short hour their loveliness consume.
But while I watched those languid petals lie
Colourless on cold earth, I could but think
How vain a thing is youthful bravery.
Trees have their time to bloom on winter's brink;
Then the rathe blossoms wither in an hour,
When the brief days of spring towards summer sink
The fruit, as yet unformed, is tart and sour;

Little by little it grows large, and weighs
The strong boughs down with slow persistent power;
Nor without peril can the branches raise
Their burden; now they stagger 'neath the weight
Still growing, and are bent above the ways;
Soon autumn comes, and the ripe, ruddy freight
Is gathered: the glad season will not stay;
Flowers, fruit, and leaves are now all desolate.
Pluck the rose, therefore, maiden, while 'tis May.

II.

How can I sing light-souled and fancy-free,
When my loved lord no longer smiles on me?

Dances and songs and merry wakes I leave
To lovers fair, more fortunate and gay;
Since to my heart so many sorrows cleave
That only doleful tears are mine for aye:
Who hath heart's ease, may carol, dance, and play;
While I am fain to weep continually.

How can I sing light-souled and fancy-free,
When my loved lord no longer smiles on me?

I too had heart's ease once, for so Love willed,
When my lord loved me with love strong and great:
But envious fortune my life's music stilled,
And turned to sadness all my gleeful state.
Ah me! Death surely were less desolate
Than thus to live and love-neglected be!

How can I sing light-souled and fancy-free,
When my loved lord no longer smiles on me?

One only comfort soothes my heart's despair,
And mid this sorrow lends my soul some cheer;
Unto my lord I ever yielded fair
Service of faith untainted pure and clear;
If then I die thus guiltless, on my bier
It may be she will shed one tear for me.

How can I sing light-souled and fancy-free,
When my loved lord no longer smiles on me?

## III.

SINCE you beg with such a grace,
How can I refuse a song,
Wholesome, honest, void of wrong,
On the follies of the place?

Courteously on you I call;
Listen well to what I sing:
For my roundelay to all
May perchance instruction bring,
And of life good lessoning. —
When in company you meet,
Or sit spinning, all the street
Clamours like a market-place.

Thirty of you there may be;
Twenty-nine are sure to buzz,
And the single silent she
Racks her brains about her coz: —
Mrs. Buzz and Mrs. Huzz,
Mind your work, my ditty saith;
Do not gossip till your breath
Fails and leaves you black of face!

Governments go out and in: —
You the truth must needs discover.
Is a girl about to win
A brave husband in her lover? —
Straight you set to talk him over:
'Is he wealthy?' 'Does his coat
Fit?' 'And has he got a vote?'
'Who's his father?' 'What's his race?'

Out of window one head pokes;
Twenty others do the same: —
Chatter, clatter! — creaks and croaks
All the year the same old game! —
'See my spinning!' cries one dame,
'Five long ells of cloth, I trow!'
Cries another, 'Mine must go,
Drat it, to the bleaching base!'

'Devil take the fowl!' says one:
'Mine are all bewitched, I guess;
Cocks and hens with vermin run,
Mangy, filthy, featherless.'
Says another: 'I confess
Every hair I drop, I keep —
Plague upon it, in a heap
Falling off to my disgrace!'

If ye see a fellow walk
Up or down the street and back,
How you nod and wink and talk,
Hurry-scurry, cluck and clack! —
'What, I wonder, does he lack
Here about?' — 'There's something wrong!'
Till the poor man's made a song
For the female populace.

It were well you gave no thought
To such idle company;
Shun these gossips, care for nought
But the business that you ply.
You who chatter, you who cry,
Heed my words; be wise, I pray:
Fewer, shorter stories say:
Bide at home, and mind your place.

Since you beg with such a grace,
How can I refuse a song,
Wholesome, honest, void of wrong,
On the follies of the place?

## TWO CARNIVAL SONGS.

### I.

FROM THE TRIUMPH OF BACCHUS.

LORENZO DE' MEDICI.

1448 — 1492

FAIR is youth and void of sorrow;
But it hourly flies away. —
Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Nought ye know about to-morrow.

This is Bacchus and the bright
Ariadne, lovers true!
They, in flying time's despite,
Each with each find pleasure new;
These their Nymphs, and all their crew
Keep perpetual holiday. —
Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Nought ye know about to-morrow.

These blithe Satyrs, wanton-eyed,
Of the Nymphs are paramours:
Through the caves and forests wide
They have snared them mid the flowers;
Warmed with Bacchus, in his bowers,
Now they dance and leap away. —
Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Nought ye know about to-morrow.

These fair Nymphs, they are not loth
  To entice their lovers' wiles.
None but thankless folk and rough
  Can resist when Love beguiles.
Now enlaced, with wreathèd smiles,
  All together dance and play.—
  Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Nought ye know about to-morrow.

See this load behind them plodding
  On the ass! Silenus he,
Old and drunken, merry, nodding,
  Full of years and jollity;
Though he goes so swayingly,
  Yet he laughs and quaffs alway.—
  Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Nought ye know about to-morrow.

Midas treads a wearier measure:
  All he touches turns to gold:
If there be no taste of pleasure,
  What's the use of wealth untold?
What's the joy his fingers hold,
  When he's forced to thirst for aye?—
  Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Nought ye know about to-morrow.

Listen well to what we're saying;
  Of to-morrow have no care!
Young and old together playing,
  Boys and girls, be blithe as air!
Every sorry thought forswear!
  Keep perpetual holiday.—
  Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Nought ye know about to-morrow.

Ladies and gay lovers young!
  Long live Bacchus, live Desire!
Dance and play; let songs be sung;
  Let sweet love your bosoms fire;
In the future come what may!—
Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Nought ye know about to-morrow.

Fair is youth and void of sorrow;
  But it hourly flies away.

## II.

FROM THE TRIUMPH OF DEATH.

ANTONIO ALAMANNI.

1512

SORROW, tears, and penitence
Are our doom of pain for aye:
This dead concourse riding by
Hath no cry but penitence!

E'en as you are, once were we:
You shall be as now we are:
We are dead men, as you see:
We shall see you dead men, where
Nought avails to take great care,
After sins, of penitence.

We too in the Carnival
Sang our love-songs through the town;
Thus from sin to sin we all
Headlong, heedless, tumbled down: —
Now we cry, the world around,
Penitence! oh, Penitence!

Senseless, blind, and stubborn fools!
Time steals all things as he rides:
Honours, glories, states, and schools,
Pass away, and nought abides;
Till the tomb our carcase hides,
And compels this penitence.

This sharp scythe you see us bear,
Brings the world at length to woe:
But from life to life we fare;
And that life is joy or woe:
All heaven's bliss on him doth flow
Who on earth does penitence.

Living here, we all must die;
Dying, every soul shall live
For the King of kings on high
This fixed ordinance doth give:
Lo, you all are fugitive!
Penitence! Cry Penitence!

Torment great and grievous dole
Hath the thankless heart mid you:
But the man of piteous soul
Finds much honour in our crew:
Love for loving is the due
That prevents this penitence.

Sorrow, tears, and penitence
Are our doom of pain for aye:
This dead concourse riding by
Hath no cry but Penitence!

O SPRING, THOU YOUTHFUL BEAUTY OF THE YEAR,
MOTHER OF FLOWERS, BRINGER OF WARBLING QUIRES,
OF ALL SWEET NEW GREEN THINGS AND NEW DESIRES,
THOU, SPRING, RETURNEST; BUT, ALAS! WITH THEE
NO MORE RETURN TO ME
THE CALM AND HAPPY DAYS THESE EYES WERE USED TO SEE.
THOU, THOU RETURNEST, THOU,
BUT WITH THEE RETURNS NOW
NOUGHT ELSE BUT DREAD REMEMBRANCE OF THE PLEASURE
I TOOK IN MY LOST TREASURE.
THOU STILL, THOU STILL, ART THE SAME BLITHE, SWEET THING
THOU EVER WAST, O SPRING;
BUT I, IN WHOSE WEAK ORBS THESE TEARS ARISE,
AM WHAT I WAS NO MORE, DEAR TO ANOTHER'S EYES.

GIOVANNI BATTISTA GUARINI,
1537–1612.
(LEIGH HUNT.)

# The Bibelot

LATE *last fall,—possibly too late for many readers here,—a little book came out in London that had for title,* Earthwork out of Tuscany: being Impressions and Translations of Maurice Hewlett.

*It may be said at once: this* Earthwork *gave us a very lasting delight. For in the episode of Sandro Botticelli and La Bella Simonetta, we came upon a veritable little masterpiece in prose.*

*How slightly tinged by realism is the story! Presumably there is no basis of fact in the meeting of the great artist and this fair child-woman of the Renaissance. Tradition affirms somewhat of one exquisite figure dominant in Botticelli's portraiture; likewise there remain Lorenzo's words concerning the beloved of Giuliano de Medici. Moreover Poliziano and the courtly crew of poets strewed her youthful hearse with*

*laments of no enduring verity,—gone all of it, and they fallen forever silent.*

She *indeed remains, the beautiful Simonetta Vespucci; for 'tis the glory of Art, that nothing it touches is disannulled or lost.* She *lives, even as the immortal women of Boccaccio live, though heart and brain alike are dust. And thus for ages dead and ages yet to come, Botticelli raised up a woman's fading flower-like face, and this we see to-day in his solemn vision of a fadeless Spring.*

## QUATTROCENTISTERIA
(How Sandro Botticelli Saw Simonetta in the Spring)
*from*
MAURICE HEWLETT

*"Death, why hast thou made life so hard to bear,*
*Taking my lady hence? Hast thou no whit*
*Of shame? The youngest flower and the most fair*
*Thou hast plucked away, and the world wanteth it.*
*O leaden Death, hast thou no pitying?*
*Our warm love's very spring*
*Thou stopp'st, and endest what was holy and meet;*
*And of my gladdening*
*Mak'st a most woful thing,*
*And in my heart dost bid the bird not sing*
*That sang so sweet.*

. . . .

*"Had I my will, beloved, I would say*
*To God, unto whose bidding all things bow,*
*That we were still together night and day:*
*Yet be it done as His behests allow.*
*I do remember that while she remain'd*
*With me, she often called me her sweet friend;*
*But does not now,*
*Because God drew her towards him, in the end.*
*Lady, that peace which none but He can send*
*Be thine. Even so."*

GIACOMINO PUGLIESI,
(*D. G. Rossetti.*)

"DIED, as we have declared, in our city a certain lady, whereby all people alike in Florence were moved to compassion. And this is no marvel, seeing that with all earthly beauty and courtesy she was adorned as, before her day, no other under heaven could have been. Among her other excellent parts, she had a carriage so sweet and winsome that whosoever should have any commerce or friendly dealing with her, straightway fell to believe himself enamoured of her. Ladies also, and all youth of her degree, not only suffered no harbourage to unkindly thought upon this her eminence over all the rest, nor grudged it her at all, but stoutly upheld and took pleasure in her loveliness and gracious bearing; and this so honestly that you would have found it hard to be believed so many men without jealousy could have loved her, or so many ladies without envy give her place. So, the more her life by its comely ordering had endeared her to mankind, pity also for her death, for the flower of her youth, and for a beauteousness which in death, it may be, showed the more resplendently than in life, did breed in the heart the smarting of great desire. Therefore she was carried uncovered on the bier from her dwelling to the place of burial, and moved all men, thronging there to see her, to abundant shedding of tears. And in some, who before had not been aware of her, after pity grew great marvel for that she, in death, had overcome that loveliness which had seemed insuperable while she yet lived. Among which people, who before had not known her, there grew a bitterness and, as it were, ground of reproach, that they had not been acquainted with so fair a thing before that hour when they must be shut off from it forever; to know her thus and have perpetual grief of her."

LORENZO DE MEDICI.

## QUATTROCENTISTERIA.

### I

UP at Fiesole, among the olives and chestnuts which cloud the steeps, the magnificent Lorenzo was entertaining his guests on a morning in April. The olives were just whitening to silver; they stretched in a trembling sea down the slope. Beyond lay Florence, misty and golden; and round about were the mossy hills, cut sharp and definite against a grey-blue sky, printed with starry buildings and sober ranks of cypress. The sun catching the mosaics of San Miniato and the brazen cross on the façade, made them shine like sword-blades in the quiver of the heat between. For the valley was just a lake of hot air, hot and murky — "fever weather," said the people in the streets — with a glaring summer sun let in between two long spells of fog. 'Twas unnatural at that season, *via;* but the blessed Saints sent the weather and one could only be careful what one was about at sun-down.

Up at the Villa, with brisk morning airs rustling overhead, in the cool shades of trees and lawns, it was pleasant to lie still, watching these things, while a silky young exquisite

sang to his lute a not too audacious ballad about Selvaggia, or Becchina and the saucy Prior of Sant' Onofrio. He sang well too, that dark-eyed boy; the girl at whose feet he was crouched was laughing and blushing at once; and, being very fair, she blushed hotly. She dared not raise her eyes to look into his, and he knew it and was quietly measuring his strength — it was quite a comedy! At each wanton *refrain* he lowered his voice to a whisper and bent a little forward. And the girl's laughter became hysterical; she was shaking with the effort to control herself. At last she looked up with a sort of sob in her breath and saw his mocking smile and the gleam of the wild beast in his eyes. She grew white, rose hastily and turned away to join a group of ladies sitting apart. A man with a heavy, rather sullen face and a bush of yellow hair falling over his forehead in a wave, was standing aside watching all this. He folded his arms and scowled under his big brows; and when the girl moved away his eyes followed her.

The lad ended his song in a broad sarcasm amid bursts of laughter and applause. The Magnificent, sitting in his carved chair, nursed

his sallow face and smiled approval. "My brother boasts his invulnerability," he said, turning to his neighbour, "let him look to it, Messer Cupido will have him yet. Already, we can see, he has been let into some of the secrets of the bower." The man bowed and smiled deferentially. "Signor Giuliano has all the qualities to win the love of ladies, and to retain it. Doubtless he awaits his destiny. The Wise Man has said that 'Beauty . . .'" The young poet enlarged on his text with some fire in his thin cheeks, while the company kept very silent. It was much to their liking; even Giuliano was absorbed; he sat on the ground clasping one knee between his hands, smiling upwards into vacancy, as a man does whose imagination is touched. Lorenzo nursed his sallow face and beat time to the orator's cadences with his foot; he, too, was abstracted and smiling. At the end he spoke; "Our Marsilio himself has never said nobler words, my Agnolo. The mantle of the Attic prophet has descended indeed upon this Florence. And Beauty, as thou sayest, is from heaven. But where shall it be found here below, and how discerned?" The man of the heavy jowl was standing

with folded arms, looking from under his brows at the group of girls. Lorenzo saw everything; he noticed him. "Our Sandro will tell us it is yonder. The Star of Genoa shines over Florence and our poor little constellations are gone out. *Ecco,* my Sandro, gravest and hardiest of painters, go summon Madonna Simonetta and her handmaidens to our Symposium. Agnolo will speak further to us of this sovereignty of Beauty."

The painter bowed his head and moved away.

A green alley vaulted with thick ilex and myrtle formed a tapering vista where the shadows lay misty blue and pale shafts of light pierced through fitfully. At the far end it ran out into an open space and a splash of sunshine. A marble Ganymede with lifted arms rose in the middle like a white flame. The girls were there, intent upon some commerce of their own, flashing hither and thither over the grass in a flutter of saffron and green and crimson. Simonetta—Sandro could see — was a little apart, a very tall, isolated figure, clear and cold in a recess of shade, standing easily, resting on one hip with her hands behind her. A soft, straight

robe of white clipped her close from shoulder to heel; the lines of her figure were thrust forward by her poise. His eye followed the swell of her bosom, very gentle and girlish, and the long folds of her dress falling thence to her knee. While she stood there, proud and remote, a chance beam of the sun shone on her head so that it seemed to burn. "Heaven salutes the Queen of Heaven,— Venus Urania!" With an odd impulse he stopped, crossed himself, and then hurried on.

He told his errand to her; having no eyes for the others.

"Signorina — I am to acquaint her Serenity that the divine poet Messer Agnolo is to speak of the sovereign power of beauty; of the Heavenly Beauty whereof Plato taught, as it is believed."

Simonetta arched a slim neck and looked down at the obsequious speaker, or at least he thought so. And he saw how fair she was, a creature how delicate and gracious, with grey eyes frank and wide, and full red lips where a smile (nervous and a little wistful, he judged, rather than defiant) seemed always to hover. Such clear-cut, high beauty made

him ashamed; but her colouring (for he was a painter) made his heart beat. She was no ice-bound shadow of deity then! but flesh and blood; a girl — a child, of timid, soft contours, of warm roses and blue veins laced in a pearly skin. And she was crowned with a heavy wealth of red-gold hair, twisted in great coils, bound about with pearls, and smouldering like molten metal where it fell rippling along her neck. She dazzled him, so that he could not face her or look further. His eyes dropped. He stood before her moody, disconcerted.

The girls, who had dissolved their company at his approach, listened to what he had to say linked in knots of twos and threes. They needed no excuses to return; some were philosophers in their way, philosophers and poetesses; some had left their lovers in the ring round Lorenzo. So they went down the green alley still locked by the arms, by the waist or shoulders. They did not wait for Simonetta. She was a Genoese, and proud as the snow. Why did Giuliano love her? *Did* he love her, indeed? He was bewitched then, for she was cold, and a brazen creature in spite of it. How dare she bare her neck

so! Oh! 'twas Genoese. "Uomini senza fede e donne senza vergogna," they quoted as they ran.

And Simonetta walked alone down the way with her head high; but Sandro stepped behind, at the edge of her trailing white robe. . . .

. . . The poet was leaning against an ancient alabaster vase, soil-stained, yellow with age and its long sojourn in the loam, but with traces of its carved garlands clinging to it still. He fingered it lovingly as he talked. His oration was concluding, and his voice rose high and tremulous; there were sparks in his hollow eyes. . . . "And as this sovereign Beauty is queen of herself, so she is subject to none other, owns to no constraining custom, fears no reproach of man. What she wills, that has the force of a law. Being Beauty, her deeds are lovely and worshipful. Therefore Phrynè, whom men, groping in darkness and the dull ways of earth, dubbed courtesan, shone in a Court of Law before the assembled nobles of Athens, naked and undismayed in the blaze of her fairness. And Athens discerned the goddess and trembled. Yes, and more; even as Aphrodite, whose

darling she was, arose pure from the foam, so she too came up out of the sea in the presence of a host, and the Athenians, seeing no shame, thought none, but, rather, reverenced her the more. For what shame is it that the body of one so radiant in clear perfections should be revealed? Is then the garment of the soul, her very mold and image, so shameful? Shall we seek to know her essence by the garment of a garment, or hope to behold that which really is in the shadows we cast upon shadows? Shame is of the brute dullard who thinks shame. The evil ever sees Evil glaring at him. Plato, the golden-mouthed, with the soul of pure fire, has said the truth of this matter in his *De Republicâ,* the fifth book, where he speaks of young maids sharing the exercise of the Palæstra, yea, and the Olympic contests even! For he says, 'Let the wives of our wardens bare themselves, for their virtue will be a robe; and let them share the toils of war and defend their country. And for the man who laughs at naked women exercising their bodies for high reasons, his laughter is a fruit of unripe wisdom, and he himself knows not what he is about; for that is ever the best of sayings

that the useful is the noble and the hurtful the base.' . . ."

There was a pause. The name of Plato had had a strange effect upon the company. You would have said they had suddenly entered a church and had felt all lighter interests sink under the weight of the dim, echoing nave. After a few moments the poet spoke again in a quieter tone, but his voice had lost none of the unction which had enriched it. . . . "Beauty is queen: by the virtue of Deity, whose image she is, she reigns, lifts up, fires. Let us beware how we tempt Deity lest we perish ourselves. Actæon died when he gazed unbidden upon the pure body of Artemis; but Artemis herself rayed her splendour upon Endymion, and Endymion is among the immortals. We fall when we rashly confront Beauty, but that Beauty who comes unawares may nerve our souls to wing to heaven." He ended on a resonant note, and then, still looking out over the valley, sank into his seat. Lorenzo, with a fine humility, got up and kissed his thin hand. Giuliano looked at Simonetta, trying to recall her gaze, but she remained standing in her place, seeing nothing of her com-

panions. She was thinking of something, frowning a little and biting her lip, her hands were before her; her slim fingers twisted and locked themselves nervously, like a tangle of snakes. Then she tossed her head, as a young horse might, and looked at Giuliano suddenly, full in the eyes. He rose to meet her with a deprecating smile, cap in hand — but she walked past him, almost brushing him with her gown, but never flinching her full gaze, threaded her way through the group to the back, behind the poet, where Sandro was. He had seen her coming, indeed he had watched her furtively throughout the oration, but her near presence disconcerted him again — and he looked down. She was strongly excited with her quick resolution; her colour had risen and her voice faltered when she began to speak. She spoke eagerly, running her words together.

"*Ecco,* Messer Sandro," she whispered blushing. "You have heard these sayings. . . . Who is there in Florence like me?"

"There is no one," said Sandro simply.

"I will be your Lady Venus," she went on breathlessly. "You shall paint me, rising from the sea-foam. . . . The Genoese

love the sea." She was still eager and defiant; her bosom rose and fell unchecked.

"The Signorina is mocking me; it is impossible; the Signorina knows it."

"Eh, *Madonna!* is it so shameful to be fair — Star of the Sea as your poets sing at evening? Do you mean that I dare not do it? Listen then, Signor Pittore; to-morrow morning at mass-time you will come to the Villa Vespucci with your brushes and pans and you will ask for Monna Simonetta. Then you will see. Leave it now; it is settled." And she walked away with her head high and the same superb smile on her red lips. Mockery! She was in dead earnest; all her child's feelings were in hot revolt. These women who had whispered to each other, sniggered at her dress, her white neck and her free carriage; Giuliano who had presumed so upon her candour — these prying, censorious Florentines — she would strike them dumb with her amazing loveliness. They sang her a goddess that she might be flattered and suffer their company: she would show herself a goddess indeed — the star of her shining Genoa, where men were brave and silent and maidens frank like the sea.

Yes, and then she would withdraw herself suddenly and leave them forlorn and dismayed.

As for Sandro, he stood where she had left him, peering after her with a mist in his eyes. He seemed to be looking over the hill-side, over the city glowing afar off gold and purple in the hot air, to Mont' Oliveto and the heights, where a line of black cypresses stood about a low white building. At one angle of the building was a little turret with a belvedere of round arches. The tallest cypress just topped the windows. There his eyes seemed to rest.

## II

At mass-time Sandro, folded in his shabby green cloak, stepped into the sun on the Ponte Vecchio. The morning mists were rolling back under the heat; you began to see the yellow line of houses stretching along the turbid river on the far side, and frowning down upon it with blank, mud-stained faces. Above, through steaming air, the sky showed faintly blue and a *campanile* to the right loomed pale and uncertain like a ghost. The sound of innumerable bells floated over the

still city. Hardly a soul was abroad; here and there a couple of dusty peasants were trudging in with baskets of eggs and jars of milk and oil; a boat passed down to the fishing, and the oar knocked sleepily in the rowlock as she cleared the bridge. And above, on the heights of Mont' Oliveto, the tapering forms of cypresses were faintly outlined — straight bars of shadow — and the level ridge of a roof ran lightly back into the soft shroud.

Sandro could mark these things as he stepped resolutely on to the bridge, crossed it, and went up a narrow street among the sleeping houses. The day held golden promise; it was the day of his life! Meantime the mist clung to him and nipped him; what had fate in store? What was to be the issue? In the Piazza Santo Spirito, grey and hollow-sounding in the chilly silences, his own footsteps echoed solemnly as he passed by the door of the great ragged church. Through the heavy darkness within lights flickered faintly and went; service was not begun. A drab crew of cripples lounged on the steps yawning and shivering, and two country girls were strolling to the mass

with brown arms round each other's waists. When Sandro's footfall clattered on the stones they stopped by the door looking after him and laughed to see his dull face and muffled figure. In the street beyond he heard a bell jingling, hasty, incessant; and soon a white-robed procession swept by him, fluttering vestments, tapers, and the Host under a canopy, silk and gold. Sandro snatched at his cap and dropped on his knees in the road, crouching low and muttering under his breath as the vision went past. He remained kneeling for a moment after it had gone, then crossed himself — forehead, breast, lip — and hurried forward. . . . He stepped under the archway into the Court. There was a youth with a cropped head and swarthy neck lounging there teazing a spaniel. As the steps sounded on the flags he looked up; the old green cloak and clumsy shoes of the visitor did not interest him; he turned his back and went on with his game. Sandro accosted him — Was the Signorina at the house? The boy went on with his game. "Eh, Diavolo! I know nothing at all," he said.

Sandro raised his voice till it rang round the courtyard. "You will go at once and inquire. You will say to the Signorina that Sandro di Mariano Filipepi the Florentine painter is here by her orders; that he waits her pleasure below."

The boy had got up; he and Sandro eyed each other for a little space. Sandro was the taller and had the glance of a hawk. So the porter went. . . .

. . . Presently with throbbing brows he stood on the threshold of Simonetta's chamber. It was the turret room of the villa and its four arched windows looked through a leafy tracery over towards Florence. Sandro could see down below him in the haze the glitter of the Arno and the dusky dome of Brunelleschi cleave the sward of the hills like a great burnished bowl. In the room itself there was tapestry, the Clemency of Scipio, with courtiers in golden cuirasses and tall plumes, and peacocks and huge Flemish horses — a rich profusion of crimson and blue drapery and stout limbed soldiery. On a bracket, above a green silk curtain, was a silver statuette of Madonna and the Bambino Gesù, with a red lamp

flickering feebly before. By the windows a low divan heaped with velvet cushions and skins. But for a coffer and a prayer desk and a curtained recess which enshrined Simonetta's bed, the room looked wind-swept and bare.

When he entered Simonetta was standing by the window leaning her hand against the ledge for support. She was draped from top to toe in a rose-coloured mantle which shrouded her head like a nun's wimple and then fell in heavy folds to the ground. She flushed as he came in, but saluted him with a grave inclination. Neither spoke. The silent greeting, the full consciousness in each of their parts, gave a curious religious solemnity to the scene — like some familiar but stately Church mystery. Sandro busied himself mechanically with his preparations — he was a lover and his pulse chaotic, but he had come to paint — and when these were done, on tip-toe, as it were, he looked timidly about him round the room, seeking where to pose her. Then he motioned her with the same reverential, preoccupied air, silent still, to a place under the silver Madonna. . . .

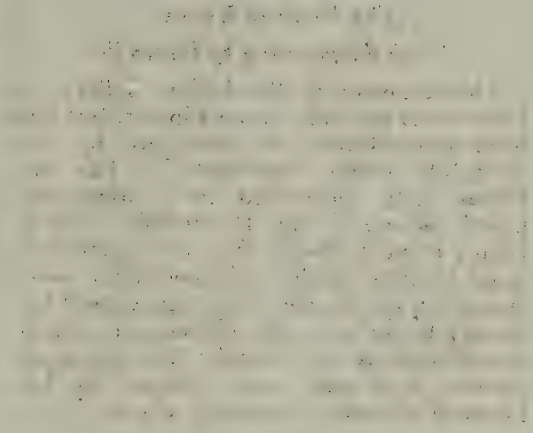
. . . There was a momentary quiver of withdrawal. Simonetta blushed vividly and drooped her eyes down to her little bare foot peeping out below the lines of the rosy cloak. The cloak's warmth shone on her smooth skin and rayed over her cheeks. In her flowery loveliness she looked diaphanous, ethereal; and yet you could see what a child she was, with her bright audacity, her ardour and her wilfulness flushing and paling about her like the dawn. There she stood trembling on the brink. . . .

Suddenly all her waywardness shot into her eyes; she lifted her arms and the cloak fell back like the shard of a young flower; then, delicate and palpitating as a silver reed, she stood up in the soft light of the morning, and the sun, slanting in between the golden leaves and tendrils, kissed her neck and shrinking shoulder.

Sandro stood facing her, moody and troubled, fingering his brushes and bits of charcoal; his shaggy brows were knit, he seemed to be breathing hard. He collected himself with an effort and looked up at her as she stood before him shrinking, awe-struck, panting at the thing she had done.

Their eyes met, and the girl's distress increased; she raised her hand to cover her bosom; her breath came in short gasps from parted lips, but her wide eyes still looked fixedly into his, with such blank panic that a sudden movement might really have killed her. He saw it all; she! there at his mercy. Tears swam and he trembled. Ah! the gracious lady! what divine condescension! what ineffable courtesy! But the artist in him was awakened almost at the same moment; his looks wandered in spite of her piteous candour and his own nothingness. Sandro the poet would have fallen on his face with an "Exi a me, nam peccator sum." Sandro the painter was different—no mercy there. He made a snatch at a carbon and aised his other hand with a kind of command —"Holy Virgin! what a line! Stay as you are, I implore you: swerve not one hair's breadth and I have you forever!" There was conquest in his voice.

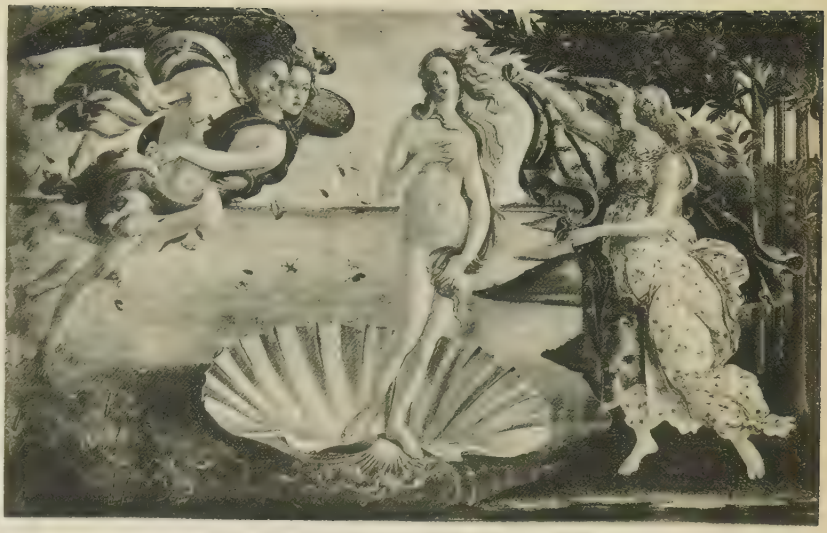
So Simonetta stood very still, hiding her bosom with her hand, but never took her watch off the enemy. As he ran blindly about doing a hundred urgent indispensable things,—noting the lights, the line she



## The Birth of Venus

*From the painting by Botticelli*

This treasure of the Uffizi Gallery in Florence is not only famous in art, but has been immortalized in literature by the story of "lovely Simonetta." This patrician lady, betrothed to a nobleman, posed as model for Botticelli's "Venus Rising from the Sea". Was the mysterious quick fever of which she died within a week, caused by her shame at having exposed her beauty to the gaze of a plebeian, or was it humiliation at the thought that the great painter had only one interest in her physical charms,—to enrich his art?



made, how her arm cut across the folds of the curtain — she dogged him with staring, fascinated eyes, just as a hare, crouching in her form, watches a terrier hunting round her and waits for the end.

But the enemy was disarmed. Sandro the passionate, the lover, the brooding devotee, was gone; so was *la bella Simonetta* the beloved, the be-hymned. Instead, here was a fretful painter, dashing lines and broad smudges of shade on his paper, while before him rose an exquisite, slender, swaying form, glistening carnation and silver, and, over all, the maddening glow of red-gold hair. Could he but catch those velvet shadows, those delicate, glossy, reflected-lights! Body of Bacchus! How could he put them in! What a picture she was! Look at the sun on her shoulder! and her hair — Christ! how it burned! It was a curious moment. The girl who had never understood or cared to understand this humble lover, guessed now that he was lost in the artist. She felt that she was simply an effect and she resented it as a crowning insult. Her colour rose again, her red lips gathered into a pout. If Sandro had but known, she was his at that

instant. He had but to drop the painter, throw down his brushes, set his heart and hot eyes bare — to open his arms and she would have fled into them and nestled there; so fierce was her instinct just then to be loved, she, who had always been loved! But Sandro knew nothing and cared nothing. He was absorbed in the gracious lines of her body, the lithe long neck, the drooping shoulder, the tenderness of her youth; and then the grand open curve of the hip and thigh on which she was poised. He drew them in with a free hand in great sweeping lines, eagerly, almost angrily; once or twice he broke his carbon and — body of a dog! — he snatched at another.

This lasted a few minutes only: even Simonetta, with all her maiden tremors still feverishly acute, hardly noticed the flight of time; she was so hot with the feeling of her wrongs, the slight upon her victorious fairness. Did she not *know* how fair she was? She was getting very angry; she had been made a fool of. All Florence would come and gape at the picture and mock her in the streets with bad names and coarse gestures as she rode by. She looked at Sandro. Santa

Maria! how hot he was! His hair was drooping over his eyes! He tossed it back every second! And his mouth was open, one could see his tongue working! Why had she not noticed that great mouth before? 'Twas the biggest in all Florence. O! why had he come? She was frightened, remorseful, a child again, with a trembling pathetic mouth and shrinking limbs. And then her heart began to beat under her slim fingers. She pressed them down into her flesh to stay those great masterful throbs. A tear gathered in her eye; larger and larger it grew, and then fell. A shining drop rested on the round of her cheek and rolled slowly down her chin to her protecting hand, and lay there half hidden, shining like a rain-drop between two curving petals of a rose.

It was just at that moment the painter looked up from his work and shook his bush of hair back. Something in his sketch had displeased him; he looked up frowning, with a brush between his teeth. When he saw the tear-stained, distressful, beautiful face it had a strange effect upon him. He dropped nerveless, like a wounded man, to his knees, and covered his eyes with his hands. "Ah

Madonna! for the pity of heaven forgive me! forgive me! I have sinned, I have done thee fearful wrong; I, who still dare to love thee." He uncovered his face and looked up radiant: his own words had inspired him. "Yes," he went on, with a steadfast smile, "I, Sandro, the painter, the poor devil of a painter, have seen thee and I dare to love!" His triumph was short-lived. Simonetta had grown deadly white, her eyes burned, she had forgotten herself. She was tall and slender as a lily, and she rose, shaking, to her height.

"Thou presumest strangely," she said, in a slow still voice, "Go! Go in peace!"

She was conqueror. In her calm scorn, she was like a young immortal, some cold victorious Cynthia whose chastity had been flouted. Sandro was pale too: he said nothing and did not look at her again. She stood quivering with excitement, watching him with the same intent alertness as he rolled up his paper and crammed his brushes and pencils into the breast of his jacket. She watched him still as he backed out of the room and disappeared through the curtains of the archway. She listened to his footsteps along the corridor, down the stair.

She was alone in the silence of the sunny room. Her first thought was for her cloak; she snatched it up and veiled herself shivering as she looked fearfully round the walls. And then she flung herself on the piled cushions before the window and sobbed piteously, like an abandoned child.

The sun slanted in between the golden leaves and tendrils and played in the tangle of her hair. . . .

## III

At ten o'clock on the morning of April the twenty-sixth, a great bell began to toll: two beats heavy and slow, and then silence, while the air echoed the reverberation, moaning. Sandro, in shirt and breeches, with bare feet spread broad, was at work in his garret on the old bridge. He stayed his hand as the strong tone struck, bent his head and said a prayer: "Miserere ei, Domine; requiem eternam dona, Domine"; the words came out of due order as if he was very conscious of their import. Then he went on. And the great bell went on; two beats together, and then silence. It seemed to gather solemnity and a heavier message as he

painted. Through the open window a keen draught of air blew in with dust and a scrap of shaving from the Lung' Arno down below; it circled round his workshop, fluttering the sketches and rags pinned to the walls. He looked out on a bleak landscape — San Miniato in heavy shade, and the white houses by the river staring like dead faces. A strong breeze was abroad; it whipped the brown water and raised little curling billows, ragged and white at the edges, and tossed about snaps of surf. It was cold. Sandro shivered as he shut to his casement; and the stiffening gale rattled at it fitfully. Once again it thrust it open, bringing wild work among the litter in the room. He made fast with the rain driving in his face. And above the howling of the squall he heard the sound of the great bell, steady and unmoved as if too full of its message to be put aside. Yet it was coming to him athwart the wind.

Sandro stood at his casement and looked at the weather — beating rain and yeasty water. He counted, rather nervously, the pulses between each pair of the bell's deep tones. He was impressionable to circumstances, and the coincidence of storm and

passing-bell awed him. . . . "Either the God of Nature suffers or the fabric of the world is breaking"; — he remembered a scrap of talk wafted towards him (as he stood in attendance) from some humanist at Lorenzo's table only yesterday, above the light laughter and snatches of song. That breakfast party at the Camaldoli yesterday! What a contrast — the even spring weather with the sun in a cloudless sky, and now this icy dead morning with its battle of wind and bell, fighting, he thought, — over the failing breath of some strong man. Man! God, more like. "The God of Nature suffers," he murmured as he turned to his work. . . .

Simonetta had not been there yesterday. He had not seen her, indeed, since that nameless day when she had first transported him with the radiance of her bare beauty and then struck him down with a level gaze from steel-cold eyes. And he had deserved it, he had — she had said — "presumed strangely." Three more words only had she uttered and he had slunk out from her presence like a dog. What a Goddess! Venus Urania! So she, too, might have ravished a worshipper as he prayed, and, after, slain him

for a careless word. Cruel? No, but a Goddess. Beauty had no laws; she was above them. Agnolo himself had said it, from Plato. . . . Holy Michael! What a blast! Black and desperate weather. . . . "Either the God of Nature suffers." . . . God shield all Christian souls on such a day! . . .

One came and told him Simonetta Vespucci was dead. Some fever had torn at her and raced through all her limbs, licking up her life as it passed. No one had known of it — it was so swift! But there had just been time to fetch a priest; Fra Matteo, they said, from the Carmine, had shrived her ('twas a bootless task, God knew, for the child had babbled so, her wits wandered, look you), and then he had performed the last office. One had fled to tell the Medici. Giuliano was wild with grief; 'twas as if *he* had killed her instead of the Spring-ague — but then, people said he loved her well! And our Lorenzo had bid them swing the great bell of the Duomo — Sandro had heard it perhaps? — and there was to be a public procession, and a Requiem sung at Santa Croce before they took her back to Genoa to lie with her

fathers. Eh! Bacchus! She was fair and Giuliano had loved her well. 'Twas natural enough then. So the gossip ran out to tell his news to more attentive ears, and Sandro stood in his place, intoning softly "Te Deum Laudamus."

He understood it all. There had been a dark and awful strife — earth shuddering as the black shadow of death swept by. Through tears now the sun beamed broad over the gentle city where she lay lapped in her mossy hills. "Lux eterna lucet ei," he said with a steady smile; "atque lucebit," he added after a pause. He had been painting that day an agonizing Christ, red and languid, crowned with thorns. Some of his own torment seems to have entered it, for, looking at it now, we see, first of all, wild eyeballs staring with the mad earnestness, the purposeless intensity of one seized or "possessed." He put the panel away and looked about for something else, the sketch he had made of Simonetta on that last day. When he had found it, he rolled it straight and set it on his easel. It was not the first charcoal study he had made from life, but a brush drawing on dark paper, done in sepia-

wash and the lights in white lead. He stood looking into it with his hands clasped. About half a braccia high, faint and shadowy in the pale tint he had used, he saw her there victim rather than Goddess. Standing timidly and wistfully, shrinking rather, veiling herself, maiden-like, with her hands and hair, with lips trembling and dewy eyes, she seemed to him now an immortal who must needs suffer for some great end; live and suffer and die; live again, and suffer and die. It was a doom perpetual like Demeter's, to bear, to nurture, to lose and to find her Persephone. She had stood there immaculate and apprehensive, a wistful victim. Three days before he had seen her thus; and now she was dead. He would see her no more.

Ah! Yes, once more he would see her.

. . . . . .

They carried dead Simonetta through the streets of Florence with her pale face uncovered and a crown of myrtle in her hair. People thronging there held their breath, or wept to see such still loveliness; and her poor parted lips wore a patient little smile, and her eyelids were pale violet and lay

heavy to her cheek. White, like a bride, with a nosegay of orange-blossom and syringa at her throat, she lay there on her bed with lightly folded hands and the strange aloofness and preoccupation all the dead have. Only her hair burned about her like a molten copper; and the wreath of myrtle leaves ran forward to her brows and leapt beyond them into a tongue.

The great procession swept forward; black brothers of Misericordia, shrouded and awful, bore the bed or stalked before it with torches that guttered and flared sootily in the dancing light of day. They held the pick of Florence, those scowling shrouds — Giuliano and Lorenzo, Pazzi, Tornabuoni, Soderini or Pulci; and behind, old Cattaneo, battered with storms, walked heavily, swinging his long arms and looking into the day's face as if he would try another fall with Death yet. Priests and acolytes, tapers, banners, vestments and a great silver Crucifix, they drifted by, chanting the dirge for Simonetta; and she, as if for a sacrifice, lifted up on her silken bed, lay couched like a white flower edged colour of flame. . . .

. . . Santa Croce, the great church, stretched forward beyond her into distances of grey mist and cold spaces of light. Its bare vastness was damp like a vault. And she lay in the midst listless, heavy-lidded, apart, with the half-smile, as it seemed, of some secret mirth. Round her the great candles smoked and flickered, and mass was sung at the High Altar for her soul's repose. Sandro stood alone facing the shining altar but looking fixedly at Simonetta on her couch. He was white and dry — parched lips and eyes that ached and smarted. Was this the end? Was it possible, my God! that the transparent, unearthly thing lying there so prone and pale was dead? Had such loveliness aught to do with life or death? Ah! sweet lady, dear heart, how tired she was, how deadly tired! From where he stood he could see with intolerable anguish the sombre rings round her eyes and the violet shadows on the lids, her folded hands and the straight, meek line to her feet. And her poor wan face with its wistful, pitiful little smile was turned half aside on the delicate throat, as if in a last appeal:— "Leave me now, O Florentines, to my rest.

I have given you all I had: ask no more. I was a young girl, a child; too young for your eager strivings. You have killed me with your play; let me be now, let me sleep!" Poor child! Poor child! Sandro was on his knees with his face pressed against the pulpit and tears running through his fingers as he prayed. . . .

As he had seen her, so he painted. As at the beginning of life in a cold world, passively meeting the long trouble of it, he painted her a rapt Presence floating evenly to our earth. A grey, translucent sea laps silently upon a little creek and, in the hush of a still dawn, the myrtles and sedges on the water's brim are quiet. It is a dream in half tones that he gives us, grey and green and steely blue; and just that, and some homely magic of his own, hint the commerce of another world with man's discarded domain. Men and women are asleep, and as in an early walk you may startle the hares at their play, or see the creatures of the darkness — owls and night hawks and heavy moths — flit with fantastic purpose over the familiar scene, so here it comes upon you suddenly that you have surprised Nature's self at her mysteries;

you are let into the secret; you have caught the spirit of the April woodland as she glides over the pasture to the copse. And that, indeed, was Sandro's fortune. He caught her in just such a propitious hour. He saw the sweet wild thing, pure and undefiled by touch of earth; caught her in that pregnant pause of time ere she had lighted. Another moment and a buxom nymph of the grove would fold her in a rosy mantle, coloured as the earliest wood-anemones are. She would vanish, we know, into the daffodils or a bank of violets. And you might tell her presence there, or in the rustle of the myrtles, or coo of doves mating in the pines; you might feel her genius in the scent of the earth or the kiss of the West wind; but you could only see her in mid-April, and you should look for her over the sea. She always comes with the first warmth of the year.

But daily, before he painted, Sandro knelt in a dark chapel in Santa Croce, while a blue-chinned priest said mass for the repose of Simonetta's soul.

# The Bibelot

Sir Philip Sidney's Astrophel and Stella, wherein the excellence of sweet poesy is concluded, *has been admirably edited by Mr. Alfred W. Pollard from the Folio text of 1598. (London: David Stott, 1888). In this exquisite little book the story of Sidney's untoward passion for Penelope Devereux who became the Lady Rich, is retold with fine restraint and yet with perfect candour.*

*'Brief, — as woman's love' might summarize and set seal upon the life of* Astrophel. *Born in November, 1554, all the world knows how in October, 1586, Sidney came to his tragic end: a finale famous to the last syllable of recorded Time. He had walked in a vague course, he said; and in words that might have been incised on some old Roman tomb* — Splendidis longum valedico nugis, — *he bade farewell to love and 'splendid toying.'*

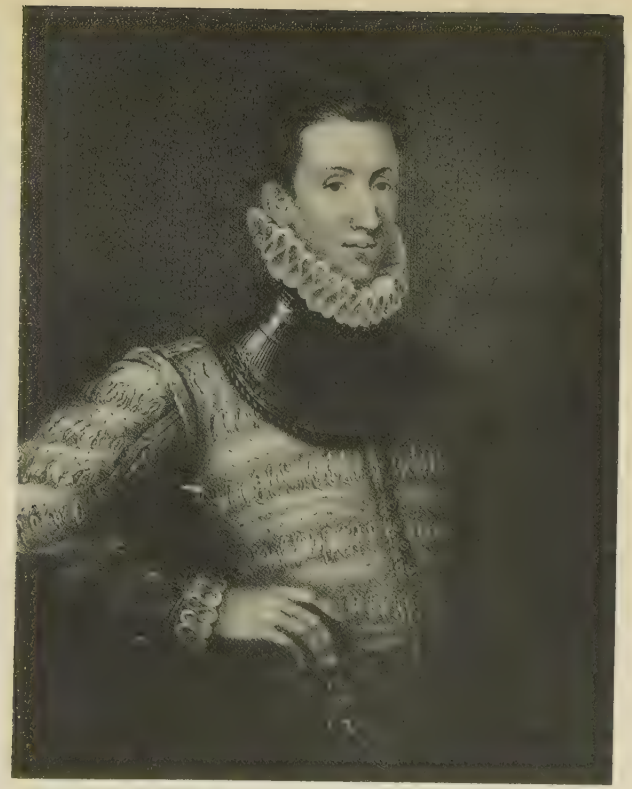
*For* Stella *it would seem her lover's name in after years, came to signify 'only dead yew leaves and a little dust.' But Poetry lives though all the Loves are lost. And in Philip Sidney was compact such riches of imagination, all human passion far above, that no unworth of woman, nor the irony of his brief days could touch or taint his well-nigh perfect fame.*

*To present certain of these sonnets and the interspersed songs possessing a continuity of personal feeling, is within our limit, and these few words suffice to introduce them.*

Sir Philip Sidney

*From the painting by Sir Anthony More*

Under the name of Astrophel, the Elizabethan soldier-courtier-poet, Sidney, commemorated his unrequited love for Lady Penelope Devereux, whom he addressed as Stella, in a group of poems that evoked the admiration of Queen Elizabeth and of Shakespeare, as they have that of critics for nearly four hundred years. In 1585 Sidney meditated sailing with Sir Francis Drake in an expedition against the Spaniards in the West Indies, but was deterred by Queen Elizabeth through fear "lest she lose the jewel of her dominions."



# Certain Songs and Sonnets from
# ASTROPHEL AND STELLA
*by*
## Sir Philip Sidney.

*" But now more happy thou, and wretched we,*
*Which want the wonted sweetness of thy voice,*
*Whiles thou now in Elysian fields so free,*
*With Orpheus, and with Linus, and the choice*
*Of all that ever did in rimes rejoice,*
*Conversest, and dost hear their heavenly lays,*
*And they hear thine, and thine do better praise.*

*So there thou livest, singing evermore,*
*And here thou livest, being ever song*
*Of us, which living lovèd thee afore,*
*And now thee worship 'mongst that blessed throng*
*Of heavenly Poets and Heroës strong.*
*So thou both here and there immortal art,*
*And everywhere through excellent desart."*

EDMUND SPENSER
(*The Ruines of Time.* 1591.)

"On the morning of Thursday, September 22, 1586, a body of two hundred English horsemen, with Sir Philip Sidney at their head, advanced, in the midst of a thick mist, to attack a Spanish convoy on its way to the town of Zutphen. . . . . Twice the English charged; . . . reinforced, a third time they hurled themselves against the Spanish troops, once more to be forced to retire. Amongst the wounded in this last charge was Sidney. . . . By an effort the wounded man . . rode back to the camp,—from whence he was borne to Arnhem, and here he lingered twenty-six days.

During these days his thoughts were set almost wholly on religion. To the exhortations of the divine "he answered, in words expressive of his unfeigned repentance, and of his firm resolution not to live as he had done; for, he said, he had walked in a vague course."

To look forward to the poet's death-bed in introducing a volume of passionate love-sonnets, may seem at first sight, infelicitous, but it is submitted that in Sidney's case it is not so. . . . Of no man was it ever more true that his death was but the epitome of his life. . . .

These songs and sonnets were written by the same Sidney who, in his deep religious feeling, and the sweet gravity of his demeanour, is typical in so many ways of the earlier and yet unnarrowed spirit of Puritanism. If this be remembered, then, they have a psychological interest only surpassed by that still greater series written by the Author of Hamlet and King Lear."

ALFRED W. POLLARD.

## CERTAIN SONNETS AND SONGS

FROM

## ASTROPHEL AND STELLA.

### I.

LOVING in truth, and faine in verse my love to show,
That she, deare She, might take some pleasure of my paine,—
Pleasure might cause her reade, reading might make her know,
Knowledge might pitie winne, and pitie grace obtaine,—
I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe;
Studying inventions fine, her wits to entertaine,
Oft turning others' leaves, to see if thence would flow
Some fresh and fruitful showers upon my sunne-burn'd braine.
But words came halting forth, wanting Invention's stay;
Invention, Nature's child, fled step-dame Studie's blowes;
And others' feete still seem'd but strangers in my way.
Thus, great with childe to speak, and helpless in my throwes,
Biting my trewand pen, beating myselfe for spite;
Foole, said my Muse to me, looke in thy heart, and write.

## V.

It is most true that eyes are form'd to serve
The inward light, and that the heavenly part
Ought to be King, from whose rules who do swerve,
Rebels to nature, strive for their owne smart.
It is most true, what we call Cupid's dart
An image is, which for ourselves we carve,
And, fooles, adore in temple of our hart,
Till that good god make church and churchmen starve.
True, that true beautie vertue is indeed,
Whereof this beautie can be but a shade,
Which, elements with mortall mixture breed.
True, that on earth we are but pilgrims made,
And should in soule up to our countrey move:
True, and yet true — that I must Stella love.

## XIV.

Alas, have I not paine enough, my friend,
Upon whose breast a fiercer Gripe doth tire
Then did on him who first stale down the fire,
While Love on me doth all his quiver spend, —
But with your rubarb words ye must contend,
To grieve me worse, in saying that Desire
Doth plunge my wel-form'd soule even in the mire
Of sinfull thoughts, which do in ruine end?
If that be sinne which doth the maners frame,
Well staid with truth in word and faith of deed,
Readie of wit, and fearing nought but shame;
If that be sinne which in fixt hearts doth breed
A loathing of all loose unchastitie,
Then love is sinne, and let me sinfull be.

## XV.

You that do search for everie purling spring
Which from the ribs of old Parnassus flowes,
And everie floure, not sweet perhaps, which growes
Neare thereabouts, into your poesie wring;
Ye that do dictionarie's methode bring
Into your rimes, running in ratling rowes;
You that poore Petrarch's long deceasèd woes
With new-borne sighes and denisen'd wit do sing;
You take wrong waies; those far-fet helpes be such
As do bewray a want of inward tuch,
And sure, at length stolne goods do come to light:
But if, both for your love and skill, your name
You seeke to nurse at fullest breasts of Fame,
Stella behold, and then begin to endite.

## XVIII.

With what sharpe checkes I in my selfe am shent
When into Reason's audite I do go,
And by just counts my selfe a banckrout know
Of all those goods which heav'n to me hath lent;
Unable quite to pay even Nature's rent,
Whiche unto it by birthright I do ow;
And, which is worse, no good excuse can show,
But that my wealth I have most idly spent!
My youth doth waste, my knowledge brings forth toyes;
My wit doth strive those passions to defend,
Which, for reward, spoile it with vaine annoyes.
I see, my course to loose my selfe doth bend;
I see — and yet no greater sorow take
Then that I loose no more for Stella's sake.

## XXI.

YOUR words, my friend (right healthful caustiks), blame
My young minde marde, whom Love doth windlas so,
That mine owne writings, like bad servants, show
My wits quicke in vaine thoughts, in vertue lame;
That Plato I read for nought but if he tame
Such coltish yeeres; that to my birth I owe
Nobler desires, least else that friendly foe,
Great expectation, weare a traine of shame.
For since mad March great promise made of me,
If now the May of my yeares much decline,
What can be hoped my harvest time will be?
Sure, you say well, "Your wisdome's golden mine
Dig deepe with Learning's spade." Now tell me this—
Hath this world ought so faire as Stella is?

## XXVIII.

You that with Allegorie's curious frame
Of others' children changelings use to make,
With me those paines, for God's sake, do not take:
I list not dig so deepe for brasen fame.
When I say Stella, I do meane the same
Princesse of Beautie, for whose only sake
The raines of Love I love, though never slake,
And joy therein, though nations count it shame.
I beg no subject to use eloquence,
Nor in hid wayes do guide philosophie;
Looke at my hands for no such quintessence;
But know that I in pure simplicitie
Breathe out the flames which burne within my heart,
Love onely reading unto me this arte.

## XXXI.

WITH how sad steps, O Moone, thou climb'st the skies!
How silently, and with how wanne a face!
What, may it be that even in heav'nly place
That busie archer his sharpe arrowes tries!
Sure, if that long with love acquainted eyes
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case,
I reade it in thy lookes; thy languisht grace,
To me, that feele the like, thy state descries.
Then, ev'n of fellowship, O Moone, tell me,
Is constant love deem'd there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be lov'd, and yet
Those lovers scorne whom that love doth possesse?
Do they call vertue there ungratefulnesse?

## XXXII.

MORPHEUS, the lively sonne of deadly Sleepe,
Witnesse of life to them that living die,
A prophet oft, and oft an historie,
A poet eke, as humours fly or creepe;
Since thou in me so sure a power doest keepe,
That never I with clos'd-up sense do lie,
But by thy worke my Stella I descrie,
Teaching blind eyes both how to smile and weepe;
Vouchsafe, of all acquaintance, this to tell,
Whence hast thou ivorie, rubies, pearle, and gold,
To shew her skin, lips, teeth, and head so well?
Foole! answers he; no Indes such treasures hold;
But from thy heart, while my sire charmeth thee,
Sweet Stella's image I do steale to mee.

## XXXIX.

COME, Sleepe! O Sleepe, the certaine knot of peace,
The baiting place of wit, the balme of woe,
The poore man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
Th' indifferent judge betweene the high and low;
With shield of proofe shield me from out the prease
Of those fierce darts dispaire at me doth throw:
O make in me those civill warres to cease;
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so.
Take thou of me smooth pillowes, sweetest bed,
A chamber deafe to noise and blind to light,
A rosie garland and a wearie hed:
And if these things, as being thine by right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier then else-where, Stella's image see.

## L.

STELLA, the fulnesse of my thoughts of thee
Cannot be staid within my panting breast,
But they do swell and struggle forth of me,
Till that in words thy figure be exprest:
And yet, as soone as they so formèd be,
According to my lord Love's owne behest,
With sad eyes I their weake proportion see
To portrait that which in this world is best.
So that I cannot chuse but write my mind,
And cannot chuse but put out what I write,
While these poore babes their death in birth do find;
And now my pen these lines had dashèd quite,
But that they stopt his furie from the same,
Because their forefront bare sweet Stella's name.

## LXIV.

No more, my deare, no more these counsels trie;
O give my passions leave to run their race;
Let Fortune lay on me her worst disgrace;
Let folke orecharg'd with braine against me crie;
Let clouds bedimme my face, breake in mine eye;
Let me no steps but of lost labour trace;
Let all the earth with scorne recount my case,
But do not will me from my love to flie.
I do not envy Aristotle's wit,
Nor do aspire to Cæsar's bleeding fame;
Nor ought do care though some above me sit;
Nor hope nor wish another course to frame,
But that which once may win thy cruell hart:
Thou art my wit, and thou my vertue art.

## LXVIII.

STELLA, the onely planet of my light,
Light of my life, and life of my desire,
Chiefe good whereto my hope doth only aspire,
World of my wealth, and heav'n of my delight;
Why doest thou spend the treasures of thy sprite,
With voice more fit to wed Amphion's lyre,
Seeking to quench in me the noble fire
Fed by thy worth, and kindled by thy sight?
And all in vaine: for while thy breath most sweet
With choisest words, thy words with reasons rare,
Thy reasons firmly set on Vertue's feet,
Labour to kill in me this killing care:
O thinke I then, what paradise of joy
It is, so faire a vertue to enjoy!

## LXIX.

O joy too high for my low stile to show!
O blisse fit for a nobler state then me!
Envie, put out thine eyes, least thou do see
What oceans of delight in me do flow!
My friend, that oft saw through all maskes my wo,
Come, come, and let me powre my selfe on thee.
Gone is the winter of my miserie!
My spring appeares; O see what here doth grow:
For Stella hath, with words where faith doth shine,
Of her high heart giv'n me the monarchie:
I, I, O I, may say that she is mine!
And though she give but thus conditionly
This realme of blisse, while vertuous course I take,
No kings be crown'd but they some covenants make.

## LXXII.

Desire, though thou my old companion art,
And oft so clings to my pure love that I
One from the other scarcely can descrie,
While each doth blow the fier of my hart;
Now from thy fellowship I needs must part;
Venus is taught with Dian's wings to flie;
I must no more in thy sweet passions lie;
Vertue's gold now must head my Cupid's dart.
Service and honor, wonder with delight,
Feare to offend, will worthie to appeare,
Care shining in mine eyes, faith in my sprite;
These things are left me by my only Deare:
But thou, Desire, because thou wouldst have all,
Now banisht art; but yet, alas, how shall?

## LXXIII.

Love, still a boy, and oft a wanton is,
School'd onely by his mother's tender eye;
What wonder then if he his lesson misse,
When for so soft a rod deare play he trie?
And yet my Starre, because a sugred kisse
In sport I suckt while she asleepe did lie,
Doth lowre, nay chide, nay threat for only this.
Sweet, it was saucie Love, not humble I.
But no scuse serves; she makes her wrath appeare
In beautie's throne: see now, who dares come neare
Those scarlet judges, threatning bloudy paine.
O heav'nly foole, thy most kisse-worthy face
Anger invests with such a lovely grace,
That Anger selfe I needs must kisse againe.

## LXXIV.

I never dranke of Aganippe well,
Nor ever did in shade of Tempe sit,
And Muses scorne with vulgar braines to dwell;
Poore layman I, for sacred rites unfit.
Some do I heare of poets' furie tell,
But, God wot, wot not what they meane by it;
And this I sweare by blackest brooke of hell,
I am no pick-purse of another's wit.
How falles it then, that with so smooth an ease
My thoughts I speake; and what I speake doth flow
In verse, and that my verse best wits doth please?
Guesse we the cause? What, is it thus? Fie, no.
Or so? Much lesse. How then? Sure thus it is:
My lips are sweet, inspired with Stella's kisse.

## FOURTH SONG.

ONELY Joy, now here you are,
Fit to heare and ease my care,
Let my whispering voyce obtaine
Sweete reward for sharpest paine;
Take me to thee, and thee to me:
"No, no, no, no, my Deare, let be."

Night hath closd all in her cloke,
Twinckling starres love-thoughts provoke,
Danger hence, good care doth keepe,
Jealouzie itselfe doth sleepe;
Take me to thee, and thee to me:
"No, no, no, no, my Deare, let be."

Better place no wit can find,
Cupid's yoke to loose or binde;
These sweet flowers on fine bed too,
Us in their best language woo;
Take me to thee, and thee to me:
"No, no, no, no, my Deare, let be."

This small light the moone bestowes
Serves thy beames but to disclose;
So to raise my hap more hie,
Feare not else, none can us spie;
Take me to thee, and thee to me:
"No, no, no, no, my Deare, let be."

That you heard was but a mouse,
Dumbe sleepe holdeth all the house:
Yet asleepe, me thinkes they say,
Young folkes take time while you may;
Take me to thee, and thee to me:
"No, no, no, no, my Deare, let be."

Niggard time threats, if we misse
This large offer of our blisse,
Long stay, ere he graunt the same:
Sweet, then, while ech thing doth frame,
Take me to thee, and thee to me:
"No, no, no, no, my Deare, let be."

Your faire mother is a-bed,
Candles out and curtaines spread;
She thinkes you do letters write;
Write, but let me first endite;
Take me to thee, and thee to me:
"No, no, no, no, my Deare, let be."

Sweet, alas, why strive you thus?
Concord better fitteth us;
Leave to Mars the force of hands,
Your power in your beautie stands;
Take thee to me, and me to thee:
"No, no, no, no, my Deare, let be."

Wo to me, and do you sweare
Me to hate? but I forbeare;
Cursèd be my destines all,
That brought me so high to fall;
Soone with my death I will please thee:
"No, no, no, no, my Deare, let be."

## EIGHTH SONG.

(CONCLUSION)

ASTROPHEL, sayd she, my love,
Cease, in these effects, to prove;
Now be still, yet still beleeve me,
Thy griefe more then death would grieve me.

If that any thought in me
Can tast comfort but of thee,
Let me, fed with hellish anguish,
Joylesse, hopelesse, endlesse languish.

If those eyes you praisèd, be
Halfe so deare as you to me,
Let me home returne, starke blinded
Of those eyes, and blinder minded;

If to secret of my hart,
I do any wish impart,
Where thou art not foremost placèd,
Be both wish and I defacèd.

If more may be sayd, I say,
All my blisse in thee I lay;
If thou love, my love content thee,
For all love, all faith is meant thee.

Trust me, while I thee deny,
In my selfe the smart I try;
Tyran honour doth thus use thee,
Stella's selfe might not refuse thee.

Therefore, deere, this no more move,
Least, though I leave not thy love,
Which too deep in me is framèd,
I should blush when thou art namèd.

Therewithall away she went,
Leaving him to passion, rent
With what she had done and spoken,
That therewith my song is broken.

## LXXXVII.

When I was forst from Stella ever deere —
Stella, food of my thoughts, hart of my hart —
Stella, whose eyes make all my tempests cleere —
By Stella's lawes of duty to depart;
Alas, I found that she with me did smart;
I saw that teares did in her eyes appeare;
I saw that sighes her sweetest lips did part,
And her sad words my saddest sence did heare.
For me, I wept to see pearles scattered so;
I sighd her sighes, and wailèd for her wo;
Yet swam in joy, such love in her was seene.
Thus, while the 'ffect most bitter was to me,
And nothing then the cause more sweet could be,
I had bene vext, if vext I had not beene.

## TENTH SONG.

O DEARE life, when shall it be
That mine eyes thine eyes may see,
And in them thy mind discover
Whether absence have had force
Thy remembrance to divorce
From the image of the lover?

Or if I me selfe find not,
After parting, ought forgot,
Nor debard from beautie's treasure,
Let no tongue aspire to tell
In what high joyes I shall dwell;
Only thought aymes at the pleasure.

Thought, therefore, I will send thee
To take up the place for me:
Long I will not after tary,
There, unseene, thou maist be bold,
Those faire wonders to behold,
Which in them my hopes do cary.

Thought, see thou no place forbeare,
Enter bravely everywhere,
Seize on all to her belonging;
But if thou wouldst garded be,
Fearing her beames, take with thee
Strength of liking, rage of longing.

Thinke of that most gratefull time
When thy leaping hart will climb,
In thy lips to have his biding,
There those roses for to kisse,
Which do breath a sugred blisse,
Opening rubies, pearles deviding.

Thinke of my most princely power,
Which I blessed shall devower
With my greedy licorous sences,
Beauty, musicke, sweetnesse, love,
While she doth against me prove
Her strong darts but weake defences.

Thinke, thinke of those dalyings,
When with dove like murmurings
With glad moning, passed anguish,
We change eyes, and hart for hart
Each to other do depart,
Joying till joy make us languish.

O my thought, my thoughts surcease,
Thy delights my woes increase,
My life melts with too much thinking;
Thinke no more, but die in me,
Till thou shalt revived be,
At her lips my nectar drinking.

## C.

O TEARES! no teares, but raine, from beautie's skies,
Making those lillies and those roses grow,
Which ay most faire, now more then most faire show,
While gracefull pitty beautie beautifies.
O honied sighs! which from that breast do rise,
Whose pants do make unspilling creame to flow,
Wing'd with whose breath, so pleasing zephires blow.
As can refresh the hell where my soule fries.
O plaints! conserv'd in such a sugred phrase,
That Eloquence it selfe envies your praise,
While sobd out words a perfect musike give.
Such teares, sighs, plaints, no sorrow is, but joy:
Or if such heavenly signes must prove annoy,
All mirth farewell, let me in sorrow live.

## CVII.

STELLA, since thou so right a princesse art
Of all the powers which life bestowes on me,
That ere by them ought undertaken be,
They first resort unto that soveraigne part;
Sweete, for a while give respite to my hart,
Which pants as though it stil should leape to thee:
And on my thoughts give thy leiftenancy
To this great cause, which needes both use and art.
And as a queene, who from her presence sends
Whom she imployes, dismisse from thee my wit,
Till it have wrought what thy owne will attends.
On servants' shame oft maister's blame doth sit:
O, let not fooles in me thy workes reprove,
And scorning say, "See what it is to love!"

## SONG. (5)

If I could thinke how these my thoughts to leave,
Or thinking still, my thoughts might have good end;
If rebell sence would reason's law receave,
Or reason foyld would not in vaine contend;
Then might I thinke what thoughts were best to thinke;
Then might I wisely swimme, or gladly sinke.

If either you would change your cruell hart,
Or, cruell still, time did your beautie staine;
If from my soul this love would once depart,
Or for my love some love I might obtaine;
Then might I hope a change, or ease of minde,
By your good helpe or in my selfe to finde;

But since my thoughts in thinking still are spent,
With reason's strife by senses overthrowne;
You fairer still and still more cruell bent,
I loving still a love that loveth none;
I yeeld and strive, I kisse and curse the paine —
Thought, reason, sense, time, you, and I maintaine.

SONG. (12)

RING out your belles, let mourning shewes be spread;
For Love is dead:
All Love is dead, infected
With plague of deep disdaine:
Worth, as nought worth, rejected,
And Faith faire scorne doth gaine.
From so ungratefull fancie,
From such a femall franzie,
From them that use men thus,
Good Lord, deliver us!

Weepe, neighbours, weepe; do you not heare it said
That Love is dead?
His death-bed, peacock's follie;
His winding sheete is shame;
His will, false-seeming holie;
His soule exectour, blame.
From so ungratefull fancie.
From such a femall franzie,
From them that use men thus,
Good Lord, deliver us!

Let Dirge be sung, and Trentals rightly read,
For Love is dead;
  Sir Wrong his tombe ordaineth
My mistresse Marble-heart,
  Which epitaph containeth,
"Her eyes were once his dart."
  From so ungratefull fancie,
  From such a femall franzie,
  From them that use men thus,
  Good Lord, deliver us!

Alas, I lie: rage hath this errour bred;
Love is not dead;
  Love is not dead, but sleepeth
In her unmatchèd mind,
  Where she his counsell keepeth,
Till due desert she find.
  Therefore from so vile fancie,
  To call such wit a franzie,
  Who Love can temper thus,
  Good Lord, deliver us!

## CIX.

THOU blind man's marke, thou foole's selfe chosen snare,
Fond fancie's scum, and dregs of scattred thought:
Band of all evils; cradle of causelesse care;
Thou web of will, whose end is never wrought:
Desire! Desire! I have too dearely bought,
With prise of mangled mind, thy worthlesse ware;
Too long, too long, asleepe thou hast me brought,
Who should my mind to higher things prepare.
But yet in vaine thou hast my ruine sought;
In vaine thou madest me to vaine things aspire;
In vain thou kindlest all thy smokie fire;
For Vertue hath this better lesson taught, —
Within my selfe to seeke my onelie hire,
Desiring nought but how to kill Desire.

## CX.

LEAVE me, O Love, which reachest but to dust;
And thou, my mind, aspire to higher things;
Grow rich in that which never taketh rust;
What ever fades, but fading pleasure brings.
Draw in thy beames, and humble all thy might
To that sweet yoke where lasting freedomes be;
Which breakes the clowdes, and opens forth the light,
That doth both shine, and give us sight to see.
O take fast hold; let that light be thy guide
In this small course which birth drawes out to death,
And think how evill becommeth him to slide,
Who seeketh heav'n, and comes of heav'nly breath.
Then farewell, world; thy uttermost I see:
Eternall Love, maintaine thy life in me.

SPLENDIDIS LONGUM VALEDICO NUGIS.

# The Bibelot

A LITTLE *masterpiece of romanticism that deservedly ranks in imaginative beauty next* A Lodging for the Night *is given entire in the present* Bibelot: Robert Louis Stevenson's The Sire De Malétroit's Door.

*It often becomes an interesting matter to examine the source of a tale like this: an almost intangible connexion with past tradition has a fascination of its own. Did the ballad of* Muckle-mou'd Meg *in Ballantyne's version, suggest to Stevenson the central fact, the nidus of the story? He, along with Browning, undoubtedly knew this ballad, itself the variant of a still earlier relation of similar import. If so, he has invested it with a charm, — an indefinable touch; — lifting it out of the domain of sudden death or marriage, into the region of clear-cut, exquisite story telling.*

*Thus we come to read this little* conte, *delightful as* De Maupassant *at his best. Once more the enchanter's magic wand is waved — our wonted hours recede: as wayfarers in a night of centuries ago, we seek with Denis de Beaulieu for safety in the winding alleys of a forgotten war-wasted town. Then, the Door opens and shuts amain, and the play is played out between these folk who never were, yet are alive for us because of their creator's art. . . . Even now as then the dawn breaks over the old city, and valley, plain and river course are bathed in rising light. At this hour, or never in the world of living men, must the Sire de Malétroit have answer — yea, or nay.*

# THE SIRE DE MALÉTROIT'S DOOR

*by*

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

*Where are the braveries, fresh or frayed?*
*The plumes, the armour—friend and foe?*
*The cloth of gold, the rare brocade,*
*The mantles glittering to and fro?*
*The pomp, the pride, the royal show?*
*The cries of war and festival?*
*The youth, the grace, the charm, the glow?*
*Into the night go one and all.*

W. E. HENLEY.

## THE SIRE DE MALETROIT'S DOOR.

DENIS DE BEAULIEU was not yet two-and-twenty, but he counted himself a grown man, and a very accomplished cavalier into the bargain. Lads were early formed in that rough, warfaring epoch; and when one has been in a pitched battle and a dozen raids, has killed one's man in an honourable fashion, and knows a thing or two of strategy and mankind, a certain swagger in the gait is surely to be pardoned. He had put up his horse with due care, and supped with due deliberation; and then, in a very agreeable frame of mind, went out to pay a visit in the grey of the evening. It was not a very wise proceeding on the young man's part. He would have done better to remain beside the fire or go decently to bed. For the town was full of the troops of Burgundy and England under a mixed command; and though Denis was there on safe-conduct, his safe-conduct was like to serve him little on a chance encounter.

It was September, 1429; the weather had fallen sharp; a flighty piping wind, laden with showers, beat about the township; and the dead leaves ran riot along the streets. Here

and there a window was already lighted up; and the noise of men-at-arms making merry over supper within, came forth in fits and was swallowed up and carried away by the wind. The night fell swiftly; the flag of England, fluttering on the spire-top, grew ever fainter and fainter against the flying clouds — a black speck like a swallow in the tumultuous, leaden chaos of the sky. As the night fell the wind rose, and began to hoot under archways and roar amid the tree-tops in the valley below the town.

Denis de Beaulieu walked fast and was soon knocking at his friend's door; but though he promised himself to stay only a little while and make an early return, his welcome was so pleasant, and he found so much to delay him, that it was already long past midnight before he said good-bye upon the threshold. The wind had fallen again in the meanwhile; the night was as black as the grave; not a star, nor a glimmer of moonshine, slipped through the canopy of cloud. Denis was ill-acquainted with the intricate lanes of Chateau Landon; even by daylight he had found some trouble in picking his way; and in this absolute darkness he soon lost it altogether. He was certain of

one thing only — to keep mounting the hill; for his friend's house lay at the lower end, or tail, of Chateau Landon, while the inn was up at the head, under the great church spire. With this clue to go upon he stumbled and groped forward, now breathing more freely in open places where there was a good slice of sky overhead, now feeling along the wall in stifling closes. It is an eerie and mysterious position to be thus submerged in opaque blackness in an almost unknown town. The silence is terrifying in its possibilities. The touch of cold window bars to the exploring hand startles the man like the touch of a toad; the inequalities of the pavement shake his heart into his mouth; a piece of denser darkness threatens an ambuscade or a chasm in the pathway; and where the air is brighter, the houses put on strange and bewildering appearances, as if to lead him farther from his way. For Denis, who had to regain his inn without attracting notice, there was real danger as well as mere discomfort in the walk; and he went warily and boldly at once, and at every corner paused to make an observation.

He had been for some time threading a lane so narrow that he could touch a wall

with either hand when it began to open out and go sharply downward. Plainly this lay no longer in the direction of his inn; but the hope of a little more light tempted him forward to reconnoitre. The lane ended in a terrace with a bartizan wall, which gave an outlook between high houses, as out of an embrasure, into the valley lying dark and formless several hundred feet below. Denis looked down, and could discern a few tree-tops waving and a single speck of brightness where the river ran across a weir. The weather was clearing up, and the sky had lightened, so as to show the outline of the heavier clouds and the dark margin of the hills. By the uncertain glimmer, the house on his left hand should be a place of some pretensions; it was surmounted by several pinnacles and turret-tops; the round stern of a chapel, with a fringe of flying buttresses, projected boldly from the main block; and the door was sheltered under a deep porch carved with figures and overhung by two long gargoyles. The windows of the chapel gleamed through their intricate tracery with a light as of many tapers, and threw out the buttresses and the peaked roof in a more intense blackness against the sky. It was

plainly the hotel of some great family of the neighbourhood; and as it reminded Denis of a town house of his own at Bourges, he stood for some time gazing up at it and mentally gauging the skill of the architects and the consideration of the two families.

There seemed to be no issue to the terrace but the lane by which he had reached it; he could only retrace his steps, but he had gained some notion of his whereabouts, and hoped by this means to hit the main thoroughfare and speedily regain the inn. He was reckoning without that chapter of accidents which was to make this night memorable above all others in his career; for he had not gone back above a hundred yards before he saw a light coming to meet him, and heard loud voices speaking together in the echoing narrows of the lane. It was a party of men-at-arms going the night round with torches. Denis assured himself that they had all been making free with the wine-bowl, and were in no mood to be particular about safe-conducts or the niceties of chivalrous war. It was as like as not that they would kill him like a dog and leave him where he fell. The situation was inspiriting but nervous. Their own torches would conceal

him from sight, he reflected; and he hoped that they would drown the noise of his footsteps with their own empty voices. If he were but fleet and silent, he might evade their notice altogether.

Unfortunately, as he turned to beat a retreat, his foot rolled upon a pebble; he fell against the wall with an ejaculation, and his sword rang loudly on the stones. Two or three voices demanded who went there — some in French, some in English; but Denis made no reply, and ran the faster down the lane. Once upon the terrace he paused to look back. They still kept calling after him, and just then began to double the pace in pursuit, with a considerable clank of armour, and great tossing of the torchlight to and fro in the narrow jaws of the passage.

Denis cast a look around and darted into the porch. There he might escape observation, or—if that were too much to expect—was in a capital posture whether for parley or defense. So thinking, he drew his sword and tried to set his back against the door. To his surprise, it yielded behind his weight; and though he turned in a moment, continued to swing back on oiled and noiseless hinges, until

it stood wide open on a black interior. When things fall out opportunely for the person concerned, he is not apt to be critical about the how or why, his own immediate personal convenience seeming a sufficient reason for the strangest oddities and revolutions in our sublunary things; and so Denis, without a moment's hesitation, stepped within and partly closed the door behind him to conceal his place of refuge. Nothing was further from his thoughts than to close it altogether; but for some inexplicable reason—perhaps by a spring or a weight—the ponderous mass of oak whipped itself out of his fingers and clanked to, with a formidable rumble and a noise like the falling of an automatic bar.

The round, at that very moment, debouched upon the terrace and proceeded to summon him with shouts and curses. He heard them ferreting in the dark corners; the stock of a lance even rattled along the outer surface of the door behind which he stood; but these gentlemen were in too high a humour to be long delayed, and soon made off down a corkscrew pathway which had escaped Denis's observation, and passed out of sight and hearing along the battlements of the town.

Denis breathed again. He gave them a few minutes' grace for fear of accidents, and then groped about for some means of opening the door and slipping forth again. The inner surface was quite smooth, not a handle, not a moulding, not a projection of any sort. He got his finger-nails round the edges and pulled, but the mass was immovable. He shook it, it was as firm as a rock. Denis de Beaulieu frowned and gave vent to a little noiseless whistle. What ailed the door? he wondered. Why was it open? How came it to shut so easily and so effectually after him? There was something obscure and underhand about all this, that was little to the young man's fancy. It looked like a snare; and yet who could suppose a snare in such a quiet by-street and in a house of so prosperous and even noble an exterior? And yet — snare or no snare, intentionally or unintentionally — here he was, prettily trapped; and for the life of him he could see no way out of it again. The darkness began to weigh upon him. He gave ear; all was silent without, but within and close by he seemed to catch a faint sighing, a faint sobbing rustle, a little stealthy creak — as though many persons were

at his side, holding themselves quite still, and governing even their respiration with the extreme of slyness. The idea went to his vitals with a shock, and he faced about suddenly as if to defend his life. Then, for the first time, he became aware of a light about the level of his eyes and at some distance in the interior of the house — a vertical thread of light, widening towards the bottom, such as might escape between two wings of arras over a doorway. To see anything was a relief to Denis; it was like a piece of solid ground to a man labouring in a morass; his mind seized upon it with avidity; and he stood staring at it and trying to piece together some logical conception of his surroundings. Plainly there was a flight of steps ascending from his own level to that of this illuminated doorway; and indeed he thought he could make out another thread of light, as fine as a needle and as faint as phosphorescence, which might very well be reflected along the polished wood of a handrail. Since he had begun to suspect that he was not alone, his heart had continued to beat with smothering violence, and an intolerable desire for action of any sort had possessed itself of his spirit. He was in

deadly peril, he believed. What could be more natural than to mount the staircase, lift the curtain, and confront his difficulty at once? At least he would be dealing with something tangible; at least he would be no longer in the dark. He stepped slowly forward with outstretched hands, until his foot struck the bottom step; then he rapidly scaled the stairs, stood for a moment to compose his expression, lifted the arras and went in.

He found himself in a large apartment of polished stone. There were three doors; one on each of three sides; all similarly curtained with tapestry. The fourth side was occupied by two large windows and a great stone chimney-piece, carved with the arms of the Malétroits. Denis recognized the bearings, and was gratified to find himself in such good hands. The room was strongly illuminated; but it contained little furniture except a heavy table and a chair or two, the hearth was innocent of fire, and the pavement was but sparsely strewn with rushes clearly many days old.

On a high chair beside the chimney, and directly facing Denis as he entered, sat a little old gentleman in a fur tippet. He sat with his legs crossed and his hands folded, and a

cup of spiced wine stood by his elbow on a bracket on the wall. His countenance had a strongly masculine cast; not properly human, but such as we see in the bull, the goat, or the domestic board; something equivocal and wheedling, something greedy, brutal, and dangerous. The upper lip was inordinately full, as though swollen by a blow or a toothache; and the smile, the peaked eyebrows, and the small, strong eyes were quaintly and almost comically evil in expression. Beautiful white hair hung straight all round his head, like a saint's, and fell in a single curl upon the tippet. His beard and moustache were the pink of venerable sweetness. Age, probably in consequence of inordinate precautions, had left no mark upon his hands; and the Malétroit hand was famous. It would be difficult to imagine anything at once so fleshy and so delicate in design; the taper, sensual fingers were like those of one of Leonardo's women; the fork of the thumb made a dimpled protuberance when closed; the nails were perfectly shaped, and of a dead, surprising whiteness. It rendered his aspect tenfold more redoubtable, that a man with hands like these should keep them devoutly folded like a virgin martyr

— that a man with so intent and startling an expression of face should sit patiently on his seat and contemplate people with an unwinking stare, like a god, or a god's statue. His quiescence seemed ironical and treacherous, it fitted so poorly with his looks.

Such was Alain, Sire de Malétroit.

Denis and he looked silently at each other for a second or two.

"Pray step in," said the Sire de Malétroit. "I have been expecting you all the evening."

He had not risen, but he accompanied his words with a smile and a slight but courteous inclination of the head. Partly from the smile, partly from the strange musical murmur with which the Sire prefaced his observation, Denis felt a strong shudder of disgust go through his marrow. And what with disgust and honest confusion of mind, he could scarcely get words together in reply.

"I fear," he said, "that this is a double accident. I am not the person you suppose me. It seems you were looking for a visit; but for my part, nothing was further from my thoughts — nothing could be more contrary to my wishes —than this intrusion."

"Well, well," replied the old gentleman indulgently, "here you are, which is the main point. Seat yourself, my friend, and put yourself entirely at your ease. We shall arrange our little affairs presently."

Denis perceived that the matter was still complicated with some misconception, and he hastened to continue his explanations.

"Your door . . ." he began.

"About my door?" asked the other raising his peaked eyebrows. "A little piece of ingenuity." And he shrugged his shoulders. "A hospitable fancy! By your own account, you were not desirous of making my acquaintance. We old people look for such reluctance now and then; when it touches our honour, we cast about until we find some way of overcoming it. You arrive uninvited, but believe me, very welcome."

"You persist in error, sir," said Denis. "There can be no question between you and me. I am a stranger in this countryside. My name is Denis, damoiseau de Beaulieu. If you see me in your house, it is only —"

"My young friend," interrupted the other, "you will permit me to have my own ideas on that subject. They probably differ from

yours at the present moment," he added with a leer, "but time will show which of us is in the right."

Denis was convinced he had to do with a lunatic. He seated himself with a shrug, content to wait the upshot; and a pause ensued, during which he thought he could distinguish a hurried gabbling as of prayer from behind the arras immediately opposite him. Sometimes there seemed to be but one person engaged, sometimes two; and the vehemence of the voice, low as it was, seemed to indicate either great haste or an agony of spirit. It occurred to him that this piece of tapestry covered the entrance to the chapel he had noticed from without.

The old gentleman meanwhile surveyed Denis from head to foot with a smile, and from time to time emitted little noises like a bird or a mouse, which seemed to indicate a high degree of satisfaction. This state of matters became rapidly insupportable; and Denis, to put an end to it, remarked politely that the wind had gone down.

The old gentleman fell into a fit of silent laughter, so prolonged and violent that he became quite red in the face. Denis got

upon his feet at once, and put on his hat with a flourish.

"Sir," he said, "if you are in your wits, you have affronted me grossly. If you are out of them, I flatter myself I can find better employment for my brains than to talk with lunatics. My conscience is clear; you have made a fool of me from the first moment; you have refused to hear my explanations; and now there is no power under God will make me stay here any longer; and if I cannot make my way out in a more decent fashion, I will hack your door in pieces with my sword."

The Sire de Malétroit raised his right hand and wagged it at Denis with the fore and little fingers extended.

"My dear nephew," he said, "sit down."

"Nephew!" retorted Denis, "you lie in your throat"; and he snapped his fingers in his face.

"Sit down, you rogue!" cried the old gentleman, in a sudden, harsh voice, like the barking of a dog. "Do you fancy," he went on, "that when I had made my little contrivance for the door I had stopped short with that? If you prefer to be bound hand and foot till your bones ache, rise and try to go

away. If you choose to remain a free young buck, agreeably conversing with an old gentleman — why, sit where you are in peace, and God be with you."

"Do you mean I am a prisoner?" demanded Denis.

"I state the facts," replied the other. "I would rather leave the conclusion to yourself."

Denis sat down again. Externally he managed to keep pretty calm, but within, he was now boiling with anger, now chilled with apprehension. He no longer felt convinced that he was dealing with a madman. And if the old gentleman was sane, what, in God's name, had he to look for? What absurd or tragical adventure had befallen him? What countenance was he to assume?

While he was thus unpleasantly reflecting, the arras that overhung the chapel door was raised, and a tall priest in his robes came forth and, giving a long, keen stare at Denis said something in an undertone to Sire de Malétroit.

"She is in a better frame of spirit?" asked the latter.

"She is more resigned, messire," replied the priest.

"Now the Lord help her, she is hard to please!" sneered the old gentleman. "A likely stripling — not ill-born — and of her own choosing, too? Why, what more would the jade have?"

"The situation is not usual for a young damsel," said the other, "and somewhat trying to her blushes."

"She should have thought of that before she began the dance! It was none of my choosing, God knows that: but since she is in it, by our lady, she shall carry it to the end." And then addressing Denis, "Monsieur de Beaulieu," he asked, "may I present you to my niece? She has been waiting your arrival, I may say, with even greater impatience than myself."

Denis had resigned himself with a good grace — all he desired was to know the worst of it as speedily as possible; so he rose at once, and bowed in acquiescence. The Sire de Malétroit followed his example and limped, with the assistance of the chaplain's arm, towards the chapel-door. The priest pulled aside the arras, and all three entered. The building had considerable architectural pretensions. A light groining sprang from six

stout columns, and hung down in two rich pendants from the centre of the vault. The place terminated behind the altar in a round end, embossed and honeycombed with a superfluity of ornament in relief, and pierced by many little windows shaped like stars, trefoils, or wheels. These windows were imperfectly glazed, so that the night air circulated freely in the chapel. The tapers, of which there must have been half a hundred burning on the altar, were unmercifully blown about; and the light went through many different phases of brilliancy and semi-eclipse. On the steps in front of the altar knelt a young girl richly attired as a bride. A chill settled over Denis as he observed her costume; he fought with desperate energy against the conclusion that was being thrust upon his mind; it could not — it should not — be as he feared.

"Blanche," said the Sire, in his most flute-like tones, "I have brought a friend to see you, my little girl; turn round and give him your pretty hand. It is good to be devout; but it is necessary to be polite, my niece."

The girl rose to her feet and turned toward the new comers. She moved all of a piece;

and shame and exhaustion were expressed in every line of her fresh young body; and she held her head down and kept her eyes upon the pavement, as she came slowly forward. In the course of her advance, her eyes fell upon Denis de Beaulieu's feet — feet of which he was justly vain, be it remarked, and wore in the most elegant accoutrement even while traveling. She paused — started, as if his yellow boots had conveyed some shocking meaning — and glanced suddenly up into the wearer's countenance. Their eyes met; shame gave place to horror and terror in her looks; the blood left her lips; with a piercing scream she covered her face with her hands and sank upon the chapel floor.

"That is not the man!" she cried. "My uncle, that is not the man!"

The Sire de Malétroit chirped agreeably. "Of course not," he said, "I expected as much. It was so unfortunate you could not remember his name."

"Indeed," she cried, "indeed, I have never seen this person till this moment — I have never so much as set eyes upon him — I never wish to see him again. Sir," she said, turning to Denis, "if you are a gentleman,

you will bear me out. Have I ever seen you — have you ever seen me — before this accursed hour?"

"To speak for myself, I have never had that pleasure," answered the young man. "This is the first time, messire, that I have met with your engaging niece."

The old gentleman shrugged his shoulders.

"I am distressed to hear it," he said. "But it is never too late to begin. I had little more acquaintance with my own late lady ere I married her; which proves," he added, with a grimace, "that these impromptu marriages may often produce an excellent understanding in the long run. As the bridegroom is to have a voice in the matter, I will give him two hours to make up for lost time before we proceed with the ceremony." And he turned toward the door, followed by the clergyman.

The girl was on her feet in a moment. "My uncle, you cannot be in earnest," she said. "I declare before God I will stab myself rather than be forced on that young man. The heart rises at it; God forbids such marriages; you dishonour your white hair. Oh, my uncle, pity me! There is not a woman in all the world but would prefer

death to such a nuptial. Is it possible," she added, faltering — "is it possible that you do not believe me — that you still think this" — and she pointed at Denis with a tremor of anger and contempt — "that you still think *this* to be the man?"

"Frankly," said the old gentleman, pausing on the threshold, "I do. But let me explain to you once for all, Blanche de Malétroit, my way of thinking about this affair. When you took it into your head to dishonour my family and the name that I have borne, in peace and war, for more than three-score years, you forfeited, not only the right to question my designs, but that of looking me in the face. If your father had been alive, he would have spat on you and turned you out of doors. His was the hand of iron. You may bless your God you have only to deal with the hand of velvet, mademoiselle. It was my duty to get you married without delay. Out of pure good-will, I have tried to find your own gallant for you. And I believe I have succeeded. But before God and all the holy angels, Blanche de Malétroit, if I have not, I care not one jack-straw. So let me recom-

mend you to be polite to our young friend; for upon my word, your next groom may be less appetizing."

And with that he went out, with the chaplain at his heels; and the arras fell behind the pair.

The girl turned upon Denis with flashing eyes.

"And what, sir," she demanded, "may be the meaning of all this?"

"God knows," returned Denis, gloomily. "I am a prisoner in this house, which seems full of mad people. More I know not; and nothing do I understand."

"And pray how came you here?" she asked.

He told her as briefly as he could. "For the rest," he added, "perhaps you will follow my example, and tell me the answer to all these riddles, and what, in God's name, is like to be the end of it."

She stood silent for a little, and he could see her lips tremble and her tearless eyes burn with a feverish lustre. Then she pressed her forehead in both hands.

"Alas, how my head aches!" she said wearily — "to say nothing of my poor heart! But it is due you to know my story, unmaid-

enly as it must seem. I am called Blanche de Malétroit; I have been without father or mother for—oh! for as long as I can recollect, and indeed I have been most unhappy all my life. Three months ago a young captain began to stand near me every day in church. I could see that I pleased him; I am much to blame, but I was so glad that anyone should love me; and when he passed me a letter, I took it home with me and read it with great pleasure. Since that time he has written many. He was so anxious to speak with me, poor fellow! and kept asking me to leave the door open some evening that we might have two words upon the stair. For he knew how much my uncle trusted me." She gave something like a sob at that, and it was a moment before she could go on. "My uncle is a hard man, but he is very shrewd," she said at last. "He has performed many feats in war, and was a great person at court, and much trusted by Queen Isabeau in old days. How he came to suspect me I cannot tell; but it is hard to keep anything from his knowledge; and this morning, as we came from mass, he took my hand into his, forced it open, and read my little billet, walking by my side all the while. When he

finished, he gave it back to me with great politeness. It contained another request to have the door left open; and this has been the ruin of us all. My uncle kept me strictly in my room until evening, and then ordered me to dress myself as you see me — a hard mockery for a young girl, do you not think so? I suppose, when he could not prevail with me to tell the young captain's name, he must have laid a trap for him; into which, alas! you have fallen in the anger of God. I looked for much confusion; for how could I tell whether he was willing to take me for his wife on these sharp terms? He might have been trifling with me from the first; or I might have made myself too cheap in his eyes. But truly I had not looked for such a shameful punishment as this! I could not think that God would let a girl be so disgraced before a young man. And now I tell you all; and I can scarcely hope that you will not despise me."

Denis made her a respectful inclination.

"Madam," he said, "you have honoured me by your confidence. It remains for me to prove that I am not unworthy of the honour. Is Messire de Malétroit at hand?"

"I believe he is writing in the salle without," she answered.

"May I lead you thither, madam?" asked Denis, offering his hand with his most courtly bearing.

She accepted it; and the pair passed out of the chapel. Blanche in a very drooping and shamefast condition, but Denis strutting and ruffling in the consciousness of a mission, and the boyish certainty of accomplishing it with honour.

The Sire de Malétroit rose to meet them with an ironical obeisance.

"Sir," said Denis, with the grandest possible air, "I believe I am to have some say in the matter of this marriage; and let me tell you at once, I will be no party to forcing the inclination of this young lady. Had it been freely offered to me, I should have been proud to accept her hand, for I perceive she is as good as she is beautiful; but as things are, I have now the honour, messire, of refusing."

Blanche looked at him with gratitude in her eyes; but the old gentleman only smiled and smiled, until his smile grew positively sickening to Denis.

"I am afraid," he said, "Monsieur de Beaulieu, that you do not perfectly understand the choice I have offered you. Follow me, I beseech you, to this window." And he led the way to one of the large windows which stood open on the night. "You observe," he went on, "there is an iron ring in the upper masonry, and reeved through that, a very efficacious rope. Now, mark my words: if you should find your disinclination to my niece's person insurmountable, I shall have you hanged out of this window before sunrise. I shall only proceed to such an extremity with the greatest regret, you may believe me. For it is not at all your death that I desire, but my niece's establishment in life. At the same time, it must come to that if you prove obstinate. Your family, Monsieur de Beaulieu, is very well in its way; but if you sprang from Charlemagne, you should not refuse the hand of a Malétroit with impunity — not if she had been as common as the Paris road — not if she were as hideous as the gargoyle over my door. Neither my niece nor you, nor my own private feelings, move me at all in this matter. The honour of my house has been compromised; I believe you to be the guilty person,

at least you are now in the secret; and you can hardly wonder if I request you to wipe out the stain. If you will not, your blood be on your own head! It will be no great satisfaction to me to have your interesting relics kicking their heels in the breeze below my windows, but half a loaf is better than no bread, and if I cannot cure the dishonour, I shall at least stop the scandal."

There was a pause.

"I believe there are other ways of settling such imbroglios among gentlemen," said Denis. "You wear a sword, and I hear you have used it with distinction."

The Sire de Malétroit made a signal to the chaplain, who crossed the room with long silent strides and raised the arras over the third of the three doors. It was only a moment before he let it fall again; but Denis had time to see a dusky passage full of armed men.

"When I was a little younger, I should have been delighted to honour you, Monsieur de Beaulieu," said Sire Alain; "but I am now too old. Faithful retainers are the sinews of age, and I must employ the strength I have. This is one of the hardest things to swallow

as a man grows up in years; but with a little patience, even this becomes habitual. You and the lady seem to prefer the salle for what remains of your two hours; and as I have no desire to cross your preference, I shall resign it to your use with all the pleasure in the world. No haste!" he added, holding up his hand, as he saw a dangerous look come into Denis de Beaulieu's face. "If your mind revolt against hanging, it will be time enough two hours hence to throw yourself out of the window or upon the pikes of my retainers. Two hours of life are always two hours. A great many things may turn up in even as little a while as that. And, besides, if I understand her appearance, my niece has something to say to you. You will not disfigure your last hours by a want of politeness to a lady?"

Denis looked at Blanche, and she made him an imploring gesture.

It is likely that the old gentleman was hugely pleased at this symptom of an understanding; for he smiled on both, and added sweetly: "If you will give me your word of honour, Monsieur de Beaulieu, to await my return at the end of the two hours before

attempting anything desperate, I shall withdraw my retainers, and let you speak in greater privacy with mademoiselle."

Denis again glanced at the girl, who seemed to beseech him to agree.

"I give you my word of honour," he said.

Messire de Malétroit bowed, and proceeded to limp about the apartment, clearing his throat the while with that odd musical chirp which had already grown so irritating in the ears of Denis de Beaulieu. He first possessed himself of some papers which lay upon the table; then he went to the mouth of the passage and appeared to give an order to the men behind the arras; and lastly he hobbled out through the door by which Denis had come in, turning upon the threshold to address a last smiling bow to the young couple, and followed by the chaplain with a hand-lamp.

No sooner were they alone than Blanche advanced towards Denis with her hands extended. Her face was flushed and excited, and her eyes shone with tears.

"You shall not die!" she cried, "you shall marry me after all."

"You seem to think, madam," replied Denis, "that I stand much in fear of death."

"Oh, no, no," she said, "I see you are no poltroon. It is for my own sake — I could not bear to have you slain for such a scruple."

"I am afraid," returned Denis, "that you underrate the difficulty, madam. What you may be too generous to refuse, I may be too proud to accept. In a moment of noble feeling towards me, you forgot what you perhaps owe to others."

He had the decency to keep his eyes on the floor as he said this, and after he had finished, so as not to spy upon her confusion. She stood silent for a moment, then walked suddenly away, and falling on her uncle's chair, fairly burst out sobbing. Denis was in the acme of embarrassment. He looked round, as if to seek for inspiration, and seeing a stool, plumped down upon it for something to do. There he sat playing with the guard of his rapier, and wishing himself dead a thousand times over, and buried in the nastiest kitchen-heap in France. His eyes wandered round the apartment, but found nothing to arrest them. There were such wide spaces between the furniture, the light fell so badly and cheerlessly over all, the dark outside air looked in so coldly through the windows, that

he thought he had never seen a church so vast, nor a tomb so melancholy. The regular sobs of Blanche de Malétroit measured out the time like the ticking of a clock. He read the device upon the shield over and over again, until his eyes became obscured; he stared into shadowy corners until he imagined they were swarming with horrible animals; and every now and again he awoke with a start, to remember that his last two hours were running, and death was on the march.

Oftener and oftener, as the time went on, did his glance settle on the girl herself. Her face was bowed forward and covered with her hands, and she was shaken at intervals by the convulsive hiccup of grief. Even thus she was not an unpleasant object to dwell upon, so plump and yet so fine, with a warm brown skin, and the most beautiful hair, Denis thought, in the whole world of womankind. Her hands were like her uncle's: but they were more in place at the end of her young arms, and looked infinitely soft and caressing. He remembered how her blue eyes had shone upon him, full of anger, pity, and innocence. And the more he dwelt on her perfections, the uglier death looked, and the more deeply

was he smitten with penitence at her continued tears. Now he felt that no man could have the courage to leave a world which contained so beautiful a creature; and now he would have given forty minutes of his last hour to have unsaid his cruel speech.

Suddenly a hoarse and ragged peal of cock-crow rose to their ears from the dark valley below the windows. And this shattering noise in the silence of all around was like a light in a dark place, and shook them both out of their reflections.

"Alas, can I do nothing to help you?" she said, looking up.

"Madam," replied Denis, with a fine irrelevancy, "if I have said anything to wound you, believe me, it was for your own sake and not for mine."

She thanked him with a tearful look.

"I feel your position cruelly," he went on. "The world has been bitter hard on you. Your uncle is a disgrace to mankind. Believe me, madam, there is no young gentleman in all France but would be glad of my opportunity, to die in doing you a momentary service."

"I know already that you can be very brave and generous," she answered. "What I *want*

to know is whether I can serve you—now or afterwards," she added, with a quaver.

"Most certainly," he answered with a smile. "Let me sit beside you as if I were a friend, instead of a foolish intruder; try to forget how awkwardly we are placed to one another; make my last moments go pleasantly; and you will do me the chief service possible."

"You are very gallant," she added, with a yet deeper sadness . . . "very gallant . . . and it somehow pains me. But draw nearer, if you please; and if you find anything to say to me, you will at least make certain of a very friendly listener. Ah! Monsieur de Beaulieu," she broke forth — "ah Monsieur de Beaulieu, how can I look you in the face?" And she fell to weeping again with a renewed effusion.

"Madam," said Denis, taking her hand in both of his, "reflect on the little time I have before me, and the great bitterness into which I am cast by the sight of your distress. Spare me, in my last moments, the spectacle of what I cannot cure even with the sacrifice of my life."

"I am very selfish," answered Blanche. "I will be braver, Monsieur de Beaulieu, for your

sake. But think if I can do you no kindness in the future—if you have no friends to whom I could carry your adieux. Charge me as heavily as you can; every burden will lighten, by so little, the invaluable gratitude I owe you. Put it in my power to do something more for you than weep."

"My mother is married again, and has a young family to care for. My brother Guichard will inherit my fiefs; and if I am not in error, that will content him amply for my death. Life is a little vapour that passeth away, as we are told by those in holy orders. When a man is in a fair way and sees all life open in front of him, he seems to himself to make a very important figure in the world. His horse whinnies to him; the trumpets blow and the girls look out of windows as he rides into town before his company; he receives many assurances of trust and regard — sometimes by express in a letter — sometimes face to face, with persons of great consequence falling on his neck. It is not wonderful if his head is turned for a time. But once he is dead, were he as brave as Hercules or as wise as Solomon, he is soon forgotten. It is not ten years since my father

fell, with many other knights around him, in a very fierce encounter, and I do not think that any one of them, nor so much as the name of the fight, is now remembered. No, no, madam, the nearer you come to it, you see that death is a dark and dusty corner, where a man gets into his tomb and has the door shut after him till the judgment day. I have few friends just now, and once I am dead I shall have none."

"Ah, Monsieur de Beaulieu!" she exclaimed, "you forget Blanche de Malétroit."

"You have a sweet nature, madam, and you are pleased to estimate a little service far beyond its worth."

"It is not that," she answered. "You mistake me if you think I am easily touched by my own concerns. I say so, because you are the noblest man I have ever met; because I recognize in you a spirit that would have made even a common person famous in the land."

"And yet here I die in a mousetrap — with no more noise about it than my own squeaking," answered he.

A look of pain crossed her face, and she was silent for a little while. Then a light

came into her eyes, and with a smile she spoke again.

"I cannot have my champion think meanly of himself. Anyone who gives his life for another will be met in Paradise by all the heralds and angels of the Lord God. And you have no such cause to hang your head. For . . . Pray, do you think me beautiful?" she asked, with a deep flush.

"Indeed, madam, I do," he said.

"I am glad of that," she answered heartily. "Do you think there are many men in France who have been asked in marriage by a beautiful maiden—with her own lips—and who have refused her to her face? I know you men would half despise such a triumph; but believe me, we women know more of what is precious in love. There is nothing that should set a person higher in his own esteem; and we women would prize nothing more dearly."

"You are very good," he said; "but you cannot make me forget that I was asked in pity and not for love."

"I am not so sure of that," she replied, holding down her head. "Hear me to an end, Monsieur de Beaulieu. I know how

you must despise me; I feel you are right to do so; I am too poor a creature to occupy one thought of your mind, although, alas! you must die for me this morning. But when I asked you to marry me, indeed, and indeed, it was because I respected and admired you, and loved you with my whole soul, from the very moment that you took my part against my uncle. If you had seen yourself, and how noble you looked, you would pity rather than despise me. And now," she went on, hurriedly checking him with her hand, "although I have laid aside all reserve and told you so much, remember that I know your sentiments towards me already. I would not, believe me, being nobly born, weary you with importunities into consent. I too have a pride of my own: and I declare before the holy mother of God, if you should now go back from your word already given, I would no more marry you than I would marry my uncle's groom."

Denis smiled a little bitterly.

"It is a small love," he said, "that shies at a little pride."

She made no answer, although she probably had her own thoughts.

"Come hither to the window," he said with a sigh. "Here is the dawn."

And indeed the dawn was already beginning. The hollow of the sky was full of essential daylight, colourless and clean; and the valley underneath was flooded with a grey reflection. A few thin vapours clung in the coves of the forest or lay along the winding course of the river. The scene disengaged a surprising effect of stillness, which was hardly interrupted when the cocks began once more to crow among the steadings. Perhaps the same fellow who had made so horrid a clangour in the darkness not half an hour before, now sent up the merriest cheer to greet the coming day. A little wind went bustling and eddying among the tree-tops underneath the windows. And still the daylight kept flooding insensibly out of the east, which was soon to grow incandescent and cast up that red-hot cannon-ball, the rising sun.

Denis looked out over all this with a bit of a shiver. He had taken her hand, and retained it in his almost unconsciously.

"Has the day begun already?" she said; and then, illogically enough: "the night has been so long! Alas! what shall we say to my uncle when he returns?"

"What you will," said Denis, and he pressed her fingers in his.

She was silent.

"Blanche," he said with a swift, uncertain, passionate utterance, "you have seen whether I fear death. You must know well enough that I would as gladly leap out of that window into the empty air as to lay a finger on you without your free and full consent. But if you care for me at all do not let me lose my life in a misapprehension; for I love you better than the whole world; and though I will die for you blithely, it would be like all the joys of Paradise to live on and spend my life in your service."

As he stopped speaking, a bell began to ring loudly in the interior of the house; and a clatter of armour in the corridor showed that the retainers were returning to their post, and the two hours were at an end.

"After all that you have heard?" she whispered, leaning towards him with her lips and eyes.

"I have heard nothing," he replied.

"The captain's name was Florimond de Champdivers," she said in his ear.

"I did not hear it," he answered, taking her supple body in his arms, and covered her wet face with kisses.

A melodious chirping was audible behind, followed by a beautiful chuckle, and the voice of Messire de Malétroit wished his new nephew a good morning.

# The Bibelot

OF *all* Mr. George Meredith's *novels,* Richard Feverel *is the surest of its reader. We cannot but feel that it ends in a wantonly tragic tangle; insoluble,—uncalled for in any scheme of things entire. Yet it would be sheer ineptitude to deny its surpassing power, or to arraign its illustrious author for lack of dramatic acceptability.*

*It is doubtful, indeed, if Mr. Meredith ever considered a happy ending save as a minor incident. Here we have, in this particular book, a chapter of life evolved under fortuitous conditions, hostile, or at least, indifferent to man's choosing. The death of Lucy is conceived in the blackest spirit of pessimism. The gods have killed her for their sport.*

*Detachable from all this, however, and possessed of a unity of its own, there is in* Richard Feverel, *what may be called for*

*want of a better title, an* Idyl of First Love.

*It is an* intermezzo *of unrecurrent hours, wherein Prince Florizel finds the 'Heaven-born Helen' of his dreams. Henceforth he will never forsake or forget her wondrous human self, and she will follow him across the world, and out of it, for his dear sake.*

*Let us turn to them.*

AN IDYL OF FIRST LOVE

*by*

GEORGE MEREDITH.

*"Narcissus was never weary of reading those two wonderful chapters where Lucy and Richard meet, and he used to say that some day he would beg leave from Mr. Meredith to reprint at his own charges just those two chapters to distribute to all true lovers in the kingdom."*

THE BOOK-BILLS OF NARCISSUS.

"YET, if *The Egoist* is . . . the book which of all Mr. Meredith's books commands wonder, *Richard Feverel* is that which wins our love. . . . It is no injustice to his other books to say that *Richard Feverel* is fuller of fine things than any of them, brilliant as each is. And, of course, the greatest thing in it is the matchless lyric of the early love of Lucy and Richard; for so I venture to name the two chapters, 'Ferdinand and Miranda,' and 'A Diversion played on a Penny Whistle,' chapters which could be taken bodily from their context to make one complete poem, to stand with the very greatest of all such idylls. Not since the *Vita Nuova* has there been another such expression of that wonder, so sweet and awful, the breathless first awakening of love within the soul of a boy and a girl, with all the bloom of its starry transfiguration."

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.
(*George Meredith; Some Characteristics.*)

# AN IDYL OF FIRST LOVE.

## I

### PRELUDE.

ABOVE green-flashing plunges of a weir, and shaken by the thunder below, lilies, golden and white, were swaying at anchor among the reeds. Meadow-sweet hung from the banks thick with weed and trailing bramble, and there also hung a daughter of earth. Her face was shaded by a broad straw-hat with a flexible brim that left her lips and chin in the sun, and sometimes nodding, sent forth a light of promising eyes. Across her shoulders, and behind, flowed large loose curls, brown in shadow, almost golden where the ray touched them. She was simply dressed, befitting decency and the season. On a closer inspection you might see that her lips were stained. This blooming young person was regaling on dewberries. They grew beneath the bank and the water. Apparently she found the fruit abundant, for her hand was making pretty progress to her mouth. Fastidious youth, which shudders and revolts at woman plumping her exquisite proportions on bread-and-butter, and would (we must suppose) joyfully have her quite scraggy to have her

quite poetical, can hardly object to dewberries. Indeed the act of eating them is dainty and induces musing. The dewberry is a sister to the lotus, and an innocent sister. You eat: mouth, eye, and hand, are occupied, and the undrugged mind free to roam. And so it was with the damsel who knelt there. The little skylark went up above her, all song, to the smooth southern cloud lying along the blue: from a dewy copse standing dark over her nodding hat, the blackbird fluted, calling to her with thrice mellow note: the kingfisher flashed emerald out of green osiers: a bow-winged heron travelled aloft, seeking solitude: a boat slipped towards her, containing a dreamy youth, and still she plucked the fruit, and ate, and mused, as if no fairy prince were invading her territories, and as if she wished not for one, or knew not her wishes. Surrounded by the green shaven meadows, the pastoral summer buzz, the weirfall's thundering white, amid the breath and beauty of wild-flowers, she was a bit of lovely human life in a fair setting: a terrible attraction. The Magnetic Youth leaned round to note his proximity to the weir-piles, and beheld the sweet vision. Stiller and

stiller grew nature, as at the meeting of two electric clouds. Her posture was so graceful that, though he was making straight for the weir, he dared not dip a scull. Just then one most enticing dewberry caught her eyes. He was floating by unheeded, and saw that her hand stretched low, and could not gather what it sought. A stroke from his right brought him beside her. The damsel glanced up dismayed, and her whole shape trembled over the brink. Richard sprang from his boat into the water. Pressing a hand beneath her foot, which she had thrust against the crumbling wet sides of the bank to save herself, he enabled her to recover her balance, and gain safe earth, whither, emboldened by the incident, touching her finger's tip, he followed her.

## II

FERDINAND AND MIRANDA.

He had landed on an Island of the still-vexed Bermoothes. The world lay wrecked behind him: Raynham hung in mists, remote, a phantom to the vivid reality of this white hand which had drawn him thither away thousands of leagues in an eye-twinkle. Hark, how Ariel sung overhead! What splendour in the heavens! What marvels of beauty about his enchanted head! And, O you Wonder! Fair Flame! by whose light the glories of being are now first seen. . . . Radiant Miranda! Prince Ferdinand is at your feet.

Or is it Adam, his rib taken from his side in sleep, and thus transformed, to make him behold his Paradise, and lose it? . . .

The youth looked on her with as glowing an eye. It was the First Woman to him.

And she — mankind was all Calaban to her, saving this one princely youth.

So to each other said their changing eyes in the moment they stood together; he pale, and she blushing.

She was indeed sweetly fair, and would have been held fair among rival damsels.

On a magic shore, and to a youth educated by a System, strung like an arrow drawn to the head, he, it might be guessed, could fly fast and far with her. The soft rose in her cheeks, the clearness of her eyes, bore witness to the body's virtue; and health and happy blood were in her bearing. Had she stood before Sir Austin among rival damsels, that Scientific Humanist, for the consummation of his System, would have thrown her the handkerchief for his son. The wide summer-hat nodding over her forehead to her brows, seemed to flow with the flowing heavy curls, and those fire-threaded mellow curls, only half-curls, waves of hair, call them, rippling at the ends, went like a sunny red-veined torrent down her back almost to her waist: a glorious vision to the youth, who embraced it as a flower of beauty, and read not a feature. There were curious features of colour in her face for him to have read. Her brows, thick and brownish against a soft skin showing the action of the blood, met in the bend of a bow, extending to the temples long and level: you saw that she was fashioned to peruse the sights of earth, and by the pliability of her brows, that the wonderful

creature used her faculty, and was not going to be a statue to the gazer. Under the dark thick brows an arch of lashes shot out, giving a wealth of darkness to the full frank blue eyes, a mystery of meaning—more than brain was ever meant to fathom: richer henceforth than all mortal wisdom to Prince Ferdinand. For when nature turns artist, and produces contrasts of colour on a fair face, where is the Sage, or what the Oracle, shall match the depth of its lightest look?

Prince Ferdinand was also fair. In his slim boating-attire his figure looked heroic. His hair, rising from the parting to the right of his forehead, in what his admiring Lady Blandish called his plume, fell away slanting silkily to the temples across the nearly imperceptible upward curve of his brows there—felt more than seen, so slight it was—and gave to his profile a bold beauty, to which his bashful breathless air was a flattering charm. An arrow drawn to the head, capable of flying fast and far with her! He leaned a little forward to her, drinking her in with all his eyes, and young Love has a thousand. Then truly the System triumphed, just ere it was to fall; and could Sir Austin have been

content to draw the arrow to the head, and let it fly, when it would fly, he might have pointed to his son again, and said to the world, "Match him!" Such keen bliss as the youth had in the sight of her, an innocent youth alone has powers of soul in him to experience.

If these two were Ferdinand and Miranda, Sir Austin was not Prospero, and was not present, or their fates might have been different.

So they stood a moment changing eyes, and the Miranda spoke, and they came down to earth, feeling no less in heaven.

She spoke to thank him for his aid. She used quite common simple words; and used them, no doubt, to express a common simple meaning; but to him she was uttering magic, casting spells, and the effect they had on him was manifested in the incoherence of his replies, which were too foolish to be chronicled.

The couple were again mute. Suddenly Miranda, with an exclamation of anguish, and innumerable lights and shadows playing over her lovely face, clapped her hands, crying aloud, "My book! my book!" and ran to the bank.

Prince Ferdinand was at her side. "What have you lost?" he said.

"My book! my book!" she answered, her long delicious curls swinging across her shoulders to the stream. Then turning to him, divining his rash intention, "Oh, no, no! let me entreat you not to," she said. "I do not so very much mind losing it." And in her eagerness to restrain him, she unconsciously laid her gentle hand upon his arm, and took the force of motion out of him.

"Indeed I do not really care for the silly book," she continued, withdrawing her hand quickly, and reddening. "Pray do not!"

The young gentleman had kicked off his shoes. No sooner was the spell of contact broken, than he jumped in. The water was still troubled and discoloured by his introductory adventure, and, though he ducked his head with the spirit of a dabchick, the book was missing. A scrap of paper floating from the bramble just above the water, and looking as if fire had caught its edges and it had flown from one adverse element to the other, was all he could lay hold of, and he returned to land disconsolately, to hear

Miranda's murmured mixing of thanks and pretty expostulations.

"Let me try again," he said.

"No, indeed!" she replied, and used the awful threat: "I will run away if you do," which effectually restrained him.

Her eye fell on the fire-stained scrap of paper, and brightened, as she cried, "There —there! you have what I want. It is that. I do not care for the book.—No, please! You are not to look at it. Give it me."

Before her playfully-imperative injunction was fairly spoken, Richard had glanced at the document, and discovered a Griffin between two Wheatsheaves: his crest, in silver: and below, O wonderment immense! his own handwriting! remnant of his burnt Offering! a page of the sacrificed Poems! one Blossom preserved from the deadly universal blight.

He handed it to her in silence. She took it and put it in her bosom.

Who would have said, have thought, that, where all else perished, Odes, fluttering bits of broad-winged Epic, Idyls, Lines, Stanzas, this one Sonnet to the Stars should be miraculously reserved for such a starry fate! passing beatitude!

As they walked silently across the meadow, Richard strove to remember the hour, and the mood of mind, in which he had composed the notable production. The stars were invoked, as seeing, and foreseeing, all, to tell him where then his love reclined, and so forth; Hesper was complacent enough to do so, and described her in a couplet:

"Through sunset's amber see me shining fair,
As her blue eyes shine through her golden hair."

And surely no words could be more prophetic. Here were two blue eyes, and golden hair; and by some strange chance, that appeared like the working of a divine finger, she had become the possessor of the prophecy, she that was to fulfil it! The youth was too charged with emotion to speak. Doubtless the damsel had less to think of, or had some trifling burden on her conscience, for she seemed to grow embarrassed. At last she drew up her chin to look at her companion under the nodding brim of her hat (and the action gave her a charmingly freakish air), crying, "But where are you going to? You are wet through. Let me thank you again, and pray leave me, and go home, and change instantly."

"Wet?" replied the magnetic muser, with a voice of tender interest, "not more than one foot, I hope? I will leave you while you dry your stocking in the sun."

At this she could not withhold a shy and lovely laugh.

"Not I, but you. You know you saved me, and would try to get that silly book for me, and you are dripping wet. Are you not very uncomfortable?"

In all sincerity he assured her that he was not.

"And you really do not feel that you are wet?"

He really did not: and it was a fact that he spoke truth.

She pursed her sweet dewberry mouth in the most comical way, and her blue eyes lightened laughter out of the half-closed lids.

"I cannot help it," she said, her mouth opening, and sounding harmonious bells of laughter in his ears. "Pardon me, won't you?"

His face took the same soft smiling curves in admiration of her.

"Not to feel that you have been in the water the very moment after!" she musically interjected, seeing she was excused.

"It's true," he said; and his own gravity then touched him to join a duet with her, which made them no longer feel strangers, and did the work of a month of intimacy. Better than sentiment laughter opens the breast to love; opens the whole breast to his full quiver, instead of a corner here and there for a solitary arrow. Hail the occasion propitious, O ye British young! and laugh, and treat love as an honest God, and dabble not with the spiritual rouge. These two laughed, and the souls of each cried out to other, "It is I," "It is I."

They laughed and forgot the cause of their laughter, and the sun dried his light river-clothing, and they strolled towards the blackbird's copse, and stood near a stile, in sight of the foam of the weir, and the many-coloured rings of eddies streaming forth from it.

Richard's boat, meanwhile, had contrived to shoot the weir, and was swinging, bottom upwards, broadside with the current down the rapid backwater.

"Will you let it go?" said the damsel, eyeing it curiously.

"Yes," he replied, and low, as if he spoke

in the core of his thought: "What do I care for it now?"

His old life was whirled away with it, dead, drowned. His new life was with her, alive, divine.

She flapped low the brim of her hat. "You must really not come any farther," she softly said.

"And will you go, and not tell me who you are?" he asked, growing bold as the fears of losing her came across him: "And will you not tell me before you go," his face burned, "how you came by that — that paper?"

She chose to select the easier question to reply to: "You ought to know me; we have been introduced." Sweet was her winning off-hand affability.

"Then who, in heaven's name, are you? Tell me! I never could have forgotten you."

"You have, I think," she said demurely.

"Impossible that we could ever have met, and I forget you!"

She looked up to him quickly.

"Do you remember Belthorpe?"

"Belthorpe! Belthorpe!" quoth Richard, as if he had to touch his brain to recollect there was such a place. "Do you mean old Blaize's farm?"

"Then I am old Blaize's niece." She tripped him a soft curtsey.

The magnetized youth gazed at her. By what magic was it that this divine sweet creature could be allied with that old churl!

"Then what — what is your name?" said his mouth, while his eyes added, "O wonderful creature! How came you to enrich the earth?"

"Have you forgot the Desboroughs of Dorset, too?" she peered at him archly from a side bend of the flapping brim.

"The Desboroughs of Dorset?" A light broke in on him. "And have you grown to this? That little girl I saw there!"

He drew close to her to read the nearest features of the vision. She could no more laugh off the piercing fervour of his eyes. Her volubility fluttered under his deeply wistful look, and now neither voice was high, and they were mutually constrained.

"You see," she murmured, "we are old acquaintances."

Richard, with his eyes still intently fixed on her, returned: "You are very beautiful!"

The words slipped out. Perfect simplicity is unconsciously audacious. Her overpower-

ing beauty struck his heart, and like an instrument that is touched and answers to the touch, he spoke.

Miss Desborough made an effort to trifle with this terrible directness: but his eyes would not be gainsaid, and checked her lips. She turned away from them, her bosom a little rebellious. Praise so passionately spoken, and by one who has been a damsel's first dream, dreamed of nightly many long nights, and clothed in the virgin silver of her thoughts in bud, praise from him is coin the heart cannot reject, if it would. She quickened her steps to the stile.

"I have offended you!" said a mortally wounded voice across her shoulder.

That he should think so were too dreadful.

"Oh, no, no! you would never offend me." She gave him her whole sweet face.

"Then why — why do you leave me?"

"Because," she hesitated, "I must go."

"No. You must not go. Why must you go? Do not go."

"Indeed, I must," she said, pulling at the obnoxious broad brim of her hat; and, interpreting a pause he made for his assent to her sensible resolve, shyly looking at him, she

held her hand out, and said, "Good-bye," as if it were a natural thing to say.

The hand was pure white; white and fragrant as the frosted blossom of a May-night. It was the hand whose shadow, cast before, he had last night bent his head reverentially above, and kissed — resigning himself thereupon over to execution for payment of the penalty of such daring: by such bliss well rewarded.

He took the hand, and held it; gazing between her eyes.

"Good-bye," she said again, as frankly as she could, and at the same time slightly compressing her fingers on his in token of adieu. It was a signal for his to close firmly upon hers.

"You will not go?"

"Pray let me," she pleaded, her sweet brows suing in wrinkles.

"You will not go?" Mechanically he drew the white hand nearer his thumping heart.

"I must," she faltered piteously.

"You will not go?"

"O yes, yes!"

"Tell me. Do you wish to go?"

The question was subtle. A moment or

two she did not answer, and then forswore herself, and said, Yes.

"Do you — do you wish to go?" He looked with quivering eyelids under hers.

A fainter, Yes, responded to his passionate repetition.

"You wish — wish to leave me?" His breath went with the words.

"Indeed I must."

Her hand became a closer prisoner.

All at once an alarming delicious shudder went through her frame. From him to her it coursed, and back from her to him. Forward and back love's electric messenger rushed from heart to heart, knocking at each, till it surged tumultuously against the bars of its prison, crying out for its mate. They stood trembling in unison, a lovely couple under these fair Heavens of the morning.

When he could get his voice, it was, "Will you go?"

But she had none to reply with, and could only mutely bend upward her gentle wrist.

"Then, farewell," he said, and dropping his lips to the soft fair hand, kissed it, and hung his head, swinging away from her, ready for death.

Strange, that now she was released she

should linger by him. Strange, that his audacity, instead of the executioner, brought blushes and timid tenderness to his side, and the sweet words, "You are not angry with me?"

"With you, O Beloved!" cried his soul. "And you forgive me, Fair Charity!"

She repeated her words in deeper sweetness to his bewildered look; and he, inexperienced, possessed by her, almost lifeless with the divine new emotions she had realized in him, could only sigh, and gaze at her wonderingly.

"I think it was rude of me to go without thanking you again," she said, and again proffered her hand.

The sweet heaven-bird shivered out his song above him. The gracious glory of heaven fell upon his soul. He touched her hand, not moving his eyes from her, nor speaking, and she, with a soft word of farewell, passed across the stile, and up the pathway through the dewy shades of the copse, and out of the arch of the light, away from his eyes.

And away with her went the wild enchantment: he looked on barren air. But it was no more the world of yesterday. The

marvellous splendours had sown seeds in him, ready to spring up and bloom at her gaze; and in his bosom now the vivid conjuration of her tones, her face, her shape, makes them leap and illumine him like fitful summer lightnings — ghosts of the vanished sun.

There was nothing to tell him that he had been making love and declaring it with extraordinary rapidity: nor did he know it. Soft flushed cheeks! sweet mouth! strange sweet brows! eyes of softest fire! how could his ripe eyes behold you, and not plead to keep you? Nay, how could he let you go? And he seriously asks himself that question.

To-morrow this place will have a memory — the river, and the meadow, and the white, falling weir: his heart will build a temple here; and the skylark will be its high-priest, and the old blackbird its glossy-gowned chorister, and there will be a sacred repast of dewberries. To-day the grass is grass: his heart is chased by phantoms, and finds rest nowhere. Only when the most tender freshness of his flower comes across him, does he taste a moment's calm; and no sooner does it come than it gives place to keen pangs of fear that she may not be his for ever.

## III.

A DIVERSION PLAYED ON A PENNY-WHISTLE.

Away with Systems! Away with a corrupt World! Let us breathe the air of the Enchanted Island.

Golden lie the meadows: golden run the streams: red gold is on the pine-stems. The sun is coming down to earth, and walks the fields and the waters.

The sun is coming down to earth, and the fields and the waters shout to him golden shouts. He comes, and his heralds run before him, and touch the leaves of oaks, and planes, and beeches lucid green, and the pine-stems redder gold; leaving brightest foot-prints upon thickly weeded banks, where the fox-glove's last upper-bells incline, and bramble-shoots wander amid moist rich herbage. The plumes of the woodland are alight; and beyond them, over the open, 'tis a race with the long-thrown shadows; a race across the heaths and up the hills, till, at the farthest bourne of mounted eastern cloud, the heralds of the sun lay rosy fingers, and rest.

Sweet are the shy recesses of the woodland. The ray treads softly there. A film

athwart the pathway quivers many-hued against purple shade fragrant with warm pines, deep moss-beds, feathery ferns. The little brown squirrel drops tail, and leaps: the inmost bird is startled to a chance tuneless note. From silence into silence things move.

Peeps of the revelling splendour above and around enliven the conscious full heart within. The flaming west, the crimson heights, shower their glories through voluminous leafage. But these are bowers where deep bliss dwells, imperial joy, that owes no fealty to yonder glories in which the young lamb gambols, and the spirits of men are glad. Descend, great Radiance! embrace creation with beneficent fire, and pass from us! You, and the vice-regal light that succeeds to you, and all heavenly pageants, are the ministers and the slaves of the throbbing content within.

For this is the home of the enchantment. Here, secluded from vexed shores, the prince and princess of the island meet; here like darkling nightingales they sit, and into eyes and ears and hands pour endless ever-fresh treasures of their souls.

Roll on, grinding wheels of the world: cries of ships going down in a calm, groans

of a System which will not know its rightful hour of exultation, complain to the universe. You are not heard here.

He calls her by her name, Lucy: and she, blushing at her great boldness, has called him by his, Richard. Those two names are the key-notes of the wonderful harmonies the angels sing aloft.

"Lucy! my beloved!"

"O Richard!"

Out in the world there, on the skirts of the woodland, a sheep-boy pipes to meditative eve on a penny-whistle.

Love's musical instrument is as old, and as poor; it has but two stops; and yet, you see, the cunning musician does thus much with it!

Other speech they have little; light foam playing upon waves of feeling, and of feeling compact, that bursts only when the sweeping volume is too wild, and is no more than their sigh of tenderness spoken.

Perhaps Love played his tune so well because their natures had unblunted edges, and were keen for bliss, confiding in it as natural food. To gentlemen and ladies he fine-draws upon the viol, ravishingly; or

blows into the mellow bassoon; or rouses the heroic ardours of the trumpet; or, it may be, commands the whole Orchestra for them. And they are pleased. He is still the cunning musician. They languish, and taste ecstasy; but it is, however sonorous, an earthly concert. For them the spheres move not to two notes. They have lost, or forfeited and never known, the first super-sensual spring of the ripe senses into passion; when they carry the soul with them, and have the privileges of spirits to walk disembodied, boundlessly to feel. Or one has it, and the other is a dead body! Ambrosia let them eat, and drink the nectar: here sit a couple to whom Love's simple bread and water is a finer feast.

Pipe, happy sheep-boy, Love! Irradiated angels, unfold your wings and lift your voices!

They have outflown philosophy. Their instinct has shot beyond the ken of science. 'Twere made for this Eden.

"And this divine gift was in store for me!"

So runs the internal outcry of each, clasping each: it is their recurring refrain to the harmonies. How it illumined the years gone by, and suffused the living Future!

"You for me: I for you!"

"We are born for each other!"

They believe that the angels have been busy about them from their cradles. The celestial hosts have worthily striven to bring them together. And, O victory! O wonder! after toil, and pain, and difficulties exceeding, the celestial hosts have succeeded!

"Here we two sit who are written above as one!"

Pipe, happy Love! pipe on to these dear innocents!

The tide of colour has ebbed from the upper-sky. In the west the sea of sunken fire draws back; and the stars leap forth, and tremble, and retire before the advancing moon, who slips the silver train of cloud from her shoulders, and, with her foot upon the pine-tops, surveys heaven.

"Lucy, did you never dream of meeting me?"

"O Richard! yes; for I remembered you."

"Lucy! and did you pray that we might meet?"

"I did!"

Young as when she looked upon the lovers in Paradise, the fair Immortal journeys onward. Fronting her, it is not night but

veiled day. Full half the sky is flushed. Not darkness; not day; but the nuptials of the two.

"My own! my own forever! You are pledged to me? Whisper!"

He hears the delicious music.

"And you are mine?"

A soft beam travels to the fern-covert under the pine-wood where they sit, and for answer he has her eyes: turned to him an instant, timidly fluttering over the depths of his, and then downcast; for through her eyes her soul is naked to him.

"Lucy! my bride! my life!"

The night-jar spins his dark monotony on the branch of the pine. The soft beam travels round them, and listens to their hearts. Their lips are locked.

Pipe no more, Love, for a time! Pipe as you will you cannot express their first kiss; nothing of its sweetness, and of the sacredness of it nothing. St. Cecilia up aloft, before the silver organ-pipes of Paradise, pressing fingers upon all the notes of which Love is but one, from her you may hear it.

So Love is silent. Out in the world there, on the skirts of the woodland, the self-satis-

fied sheep-boy delivers a last complacent squint down the length of his penny-whistle, and, with a flourish correspondingly wry-faced, he also marches into silence, hailed by supper. The woods are still. There is heard but the night-jar spinning on the pine-branch, circled by moonlight.

# TWO POEMS.

## I

## THE MEETING.

THE old coach-road thro' a common of furze,
With knolls of pines, ran white:
Berries of autumn, with thistles, and burrs,
And spider-threads, droop'd in the light.

The light in a thin blue veil peer'd sick;
The sheep grazed close and still;
The smoke of a farm by a yellow rick
Curl'd lazily under a hill.

No fly shook the round of the silver net;
No insect the swift bird chased;
Only two travellers moved and met
Across that hazy waste.

One was a girl with a babe that throve,
Her ruin and her bliss;
One was a youth with a lawless love,
Who clasped it the more for this.

The girl for her babe humm'd prayerful speech;
The youth for his love did pray;
Each cast a wistful look on each,
And either went their way.

II

## DIRGE IN WOODS.

A WIND sways the pines,
And below
Not a breath of wild air;
Still as the mosses that glow
On the flooring and over the lines
Of the roots here and there.
The pine-tree drops it dead;
They are quiet, as under the sea.
Overhead, overhead
Rushes life in a race,
As the clouds the clouds chase;
And we go,
And we drop like the fruit of the tree,
Even we,
Even so.

GEORGE MEREDITH.

# The Bibelot

THE *poetry of* Mr. Robert Bridges *is of a sort the more enduring because so lightly touched by passionate extreme. Until 1890, when the volume of* Shorter Poems *appeared, very little had been published by him in the regular way; his finest work, the sonnet sequence entitled* The Growth of Love,* *being privately printed, and to English readers a book that still remains inaccessible.*

*With the exception of four sonnets from this latter volume, our selections are taken wholly from the* Shorter Poems. *Nothing can be finer in their way than these lyrics of Mr. Bridges, untouched by Euphuism, untroubled by a single strident note. Only to have written such verse as* 'I have loved flowers that fade' *is to have achieved lyrical perfection.*

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* An edition of 400 copies was issued in 1894 by Mr. Mosher in his ENGLISH REPRINT SERIES, of which a limited number are still for sale at $2.00 net.

*And one must go back two centuries in English song to recover this scholarly idylism,—this exquisite singing sense born of country sights and sounds,—these 'warblings at eve when all the woods are still.'*

LYRICS
*from*
ROBERT BRIDGES.

*I love all beauteous things,*
*I seek and adore them;*
*God hath no better praise,*
*And man in his hasty days*
*Is honoured for them.*

*I too will something make*
*And joy in the making;*
*Altho' to-morrow it seem*
*Like the empty words of a dream*
*Remembered on waking.*

ROBERT BRIDGES.

"MR. BRIDGES' poems are seldom mere outcries of passion. . . Pleasure rounded with peace, a tender tranquillity with sudden impulses of joy give origin to some of the most beautiful of these lyrical poems. . . Many of his lyrics are charged with fine and tender human sentiment, and he can express moods of dejection and meditative sorrow as well as the happiness of lovers. All he has to tell is that he loves beauty and loves love; and all he has done is to praise God in the best of ways by making some beautiful things. . . Probably no part of Mr. Bridges' work is less generally known than his sonnets, but the fault does not lie with the public. *'The Growth of Love'* deserves the good fortune that befalls books when they fare forth to choose lovers out of the crowd—those who in a book hear the right voice and follow it.

"To attempt anything of the nature of a final estimate . . would be premature. My task has been a humbler one. I desire to make a gift of beauty more widely known to lovers of literature."

EDWARD DOWDEN.

## ELEGY.

CLEAR and gentle stream!
Known and loved so long,
That hast heard the song,
And the idle dream
Of my boyish day;
While I once again
Down thy margin stray,
In the selfsame strain
Still my voice is spent,
With my old lament,
And my idle dream,
Clear and gentle stream!

Where my old seat was
Here again I sit,
Where the long boughs knit
Over stream and grass
A translucent eaves:
Where back eddies play
Shipwreck with the leaves,
And the proud swans stray,
Sailing one by one
Out of stream and sun,
And the fish lie cool
In their chosen pool.

Many an afternoon
Of the summer day
Dreaming here I lay;
And I know how soon,
Idly at its hour,
First the deep bell hums
From the minster tower,
And then evening comes,
Creeping up the glade,
With her lengthening shade,
And the tardy boon,
Of her brightening moon.

Clear and gentle stream!
Ere again I go
Where thou dost not flow,
Well does it beseem
Thee to hear again
Once my youthful song,
That familiar strain
Silent now so long:
Be as I content
With my old lament,
And my idle dream,
Clear and gentle stream!

## ELEGY.

THE wood is bare: a river-mist is steeping
The trees that winter's chill of life bereaves.
Only their stiffened boughs break silence, weeping
Over their fallen leaves:

That lie upon the dank earth brown and rotten,
Miry and matted in the soaking wet:
Forgotten with the spring, that is forgotten
By them that can forget.

Yet it was here we walked when ferns were springing,
And through the mossy bank shot bud and blade: —
Here found in summer, when the birds were singing,
A green and pleasant shade.

'Twas here we loved in sunnier days and greener;
And now, in this disconsolate decay,
I come to see her where I most have seen her,
And touch the happier day.

For on this path, at every turn and corner,
The fancy of her figure on me falls:
Yet walks she with the slow step of a mourner,
Nor hears my voice that calls.

So through my heart there winds a track of feeling,
A path of memory, that is all her own:

Whereto her ghostly figure ever stealing
Haunts the sad spot alone.

About her steps the trunks are bare, the branches
Drip heavy tears upon her downcast head;
And bleed from unseen wounds no warm sun staunches,
For the year's sun is dead.

And dead leaves wrap the fruits that summer planted:
And birds that love the South have taken wing.
The wanderer, loitering o'er the scene enchanted,
Weeps, and despairs of spring.

I WILL not let thee go.
Ends all our month-long love in this?
Can it be summed up so,
Quit in a single kiss?
I will not let thee go.

I will not let thee go.
If thy words' breath could scare thy deeds,
As the soft south can blow
And toss the feathered seeds,
Then might I let thee go.

I will not let thee go.
Had not the great sun seen, I might;
Or were he reckoned slow
To bring the false to light,
Then might I let thee go.

I will not let thee go.
The stars that crowd the summer skies
Have watched us so below
With all their million eyes,
I dare not let thee go.

I will not let thee go.
Have we not chid the changeful moon,
Now rising late, and now
Because she set too soon,
And shall I let thee go?

I will not let thee go.
Have not the young flowers been content,
Plucked ere their buds could blow,
To seal our sacrament?
I cannot let thee go.

I will not let thee go.
I hold thee by too many bands:
Thou sayest farewell, and lo!
I have thee by the hands,
And will not let thee go.

## ELEGY

### ON A LADY, WHOM GRIEF FOR THE DEATH OF HER BETROTHED KILLED.

ASSEMBLE, all ye maidens, at the door,
And all ye loves, assemble; far and wide
Proclaim the bridal, that proclaimed before
Has been deferred to this late eventide:
For on this night the bride,
The days of her betrothal over,
Leaves the parental hearth for evermore;
To-night the bride goes forth to meet her lover.

Reach down the wedding vesture, that has lain
Yet all unvisited, the silken gown:
Bring out the bracelets, and the golden chain
Her dearer friends provided: sere and brown
Bring out the festal crown,
And set it on her forehead lightly:
Though it be withered, twine no wreath again;
This only is the crown she can wear rightly.

Cloke her in ermine, for the night is cold,
And wrap her warmly, for the night is long,
In pious hands the flaming torches hold,
While her attendants, chosen from among
Her faithful virgin throng,
May lay her in cedar litter,

Decking her coverlet with sprigs of gold,
Roses, and lilies white that best befit her.

Sound flute and tabor, that the bridal be
Not without music, nor with these alone;
But let the viol lead the melody,
With lesser intervals, and plaintive moan
Of sinking semitone;
And, all in choir, the virgin voices
Rest not from singing in skilled harmony
The song that aye the bridegroom's ear rejoices.

Let the priests go before, arrayed in white,
And let the dark stoled minstrels follows slow,
Next they that bear her, honoured on this night,
And then the maidens, in a double row,
Each singing soft and low,
And each on high a torch upstaying:
Unto her lover lead her forth with light,
With music, and with singing, and with praying.

'Twas at this sheltering hour he nightly came,
And found her trusty window open wide,
And knew the signal of the timorous flame,
That long the restless curtain would not hide
Her form that stood beside;
As scarce she dared to be delighted,
Listening to that sweet tale, that is no shame
To faithful lovers, that their hearts have plighted.

But now for many days the dewy grass
Has shown no markings of his feet at morn:
And watching she has seen no shadow pass
The moonlit walk, and heard no music borne
Upon her ear forlorn.
In vain has she looked out to greet him;
He has not come, he will not come, alas!
So let us bear her out where she must meet him.

Now to the river bank the priests are come:
The bark is ready to receive its freight:
Let some prepare her place therein, and some
Embark the litter with its slender weight:
The rest stand by in state,
And sing her a safe passage over;
While she is oared across to her new home,
Into the arms of her expectant lover.

And thou, O lover, that art on the watch,
Where, on the banks of the forgetful streams,
The pale indifferent ghosts wander, and snatch
The sweeter moments of their broken dreams, —
Thou, when the torchlight gleams,
When thou shalt see the slow procession,
And when thine ears the fitful music catch,
Rejoice! for thou art near to thy possession.

## A PASSER BY

WHITHER, O splendid ship, thy white sails crowding,
Leaning across the bosom of the urgent West,
That fearest nor sea rising, nor sky clouding,
Whither away, fair rover, and what thy quest?
Ah! soon, when Winter has all our vales opprest,
When skies are cold and misty, and hail is hurling,
Wilt thóu glíde on the blue Pacific, or rest
In a summer haven asleep, thy white sails furling.

I there before thee, in the country so well thou knowest,
Already arrived am inhaling the odorous air:
I watch thee enter unerringly where thou goest,
And anchor queen of the strange shipping there,
Thy sails for awnings spread, thy masts bare:
Nor is aught from the foaming reef to the snow-capped, grandest
Peak, that is over the feathery palms more fair
Than thou, so upright, so stately, and still thou standest.

And yet, O splendid ship, unhailed and nameless,
I know not if, aiming a fancy, I rightly divine
That thou hast a purpose joyful, a courage blameless,
Thy port assured in a happier land than mine.
But for all I have given thee, beauty enough is thine,
As thou, aslant with trim tackle and shrouding,
From the proud nostril curve of a prow's line
In the offing scatterest foam, thy white sails crowding.

THERE is a hill beside the silver Thames,
Shady with birch and beech and odorous pine:
And brilliant underfoot with thousand gems
Steeply the thickets to his floods decline.
Straight trees in every place
Their thick tops interlace,
And pendant branches trail their foliage fine
Upon his watery face.

Swift from the sweltering pasturage he flows:
His stream, alert to seek the pleasant shade,
Pictures his gentle purpose, as he goes
Straight to the caverned pool his toil has made.
His winter floods lay bare
The stout roots in the air:
His summer streams are cool, when they have play
Among their fibrous hair.

A rushy island guards the sacred bower,
And hides it from the meadow, where in peace
The lazy cows wrench many a scented flower,
Robbing the golden market of the bees:
And laden barges float
By banks of myosote;
And scented flag and golden flower-de-lys
Delay the loitering boat.

And on this side the island, where the pool
Eddies away, are tangled mass on mass
The water-weeds, that net the fishes cool,
And scarce allow a narrow stream to pass;
    Where spreading crowfoot mars
    The drowning nenuphars,
Waving the tassels of her silken grass
    Below her silver stars.

But in the purple pool there nothing grows,
Not the white water-lily spoked with gold;
Though best she loves the hollows, and well knows
On quiet streams her broad shields to unfold:
    Yet should her roots but try
    Within these deeps to lie,
Not her long reaching stalk could ever hold
    Her waxen head so high.

Sometimes an angler comes, and drops his hook
Within its hidden depths, and 'gainst a tree
Leaning his rod, reads in some pleasant book,
Forgetting soon his pride of fishery;
    And dreams, or falls asleep,
    While curious fishes peep
About his nibbled bait, or scornfully
    Dart off and rise and leap.

And sometimes a slow figure 'neath the trees,
In ancient-fashioned smock, with tottering care,
Upon a staff propping his weary knees,
May by the pathway of the forest fare:
    As from a buried day
    Across the mind will stray
Some perishing mute shadow, — and unaware
    He passeth on his way.

Else, he that wishes solitude is safe,
Whether he bathe at morning in the stream:
Or lead his love there when the hot hours chafe
The meadows, busy with a blurring steam;
    Or watch, as fades the light,
    The gibbous moon grow bright,
Until her magic rays dance in a dream,
    And glorify the night.

Where is this bower beside the silver Thames?
O pool and flowery thickets, hear my vow!
O trees of freshest foliage and straight stems,
No sharer of my secret I allow:
    Lest ere I come the while
    Strange feet your shades defile;
Or lest the burly oarsman turns his prow
    Within your guardian isle.

## SPRING.

### ODE I.

### INVITATION TO THE COUNTRY.

AGAIN with pleasant green
Has Spring renewed the wood,
And where the bare trunks stood
Are leafy arbours seen;
And back on budding boughs
Come birds, to court and pair,
Whose rival amorous vows
Amaze the scented air.

The freshets are unbound,
And leaping from the hill,
Their mossy banks refill
With streams of light and sound:
And scattered down the meads,
From hour to hour unfold
A thousand buds and beads
In stars and cups of gold.

Now hear, and see, and note,
The farms are all astir,
And every labourer
Has doffed his winter coat;

And how with specks of white
They dot the brown hillside,
Or jaunt and sing outright
As by their teams they stride.

They sing to feel the Sun
Regain his wanton strength;
To know the year at length
Rewards their labour done;
To see the rootless stake
They set bare in the ground,
Burst into leaf, and shake
Its grateful scent around.

Ah now an evil lot
Is his, who toils for gain,
Where crowded chimneys stain
The heavens his choice forgot;
'Tis on the blighted trees
That deck his garden dim,
And in the tainted breeze,
That sweet spring comes to him.

Far sooner I would choose
The life of brutes that bask,
Than set myself a task,
Which inborn powers refuse:

And rather far enjoy
The body, than invent
A duty, to destroy
The ease which nature sent;

And country life I praise,
And lead, because I find
The philosophic mind
Can take no middle ways;
She will not leave her love
To mix with men, her art
Is all to strive above
The crowd, or stand apart.

Thrice happy he, the rare
Prometheus, who can play
With hidden things, and lay
New realms of nature bare;
Whose venturous step has trod
Hell underfoot, and won
A crown from man and God
For all that he has done.—

That highest gift of all,
Since crabbèd fate did flood
My heart with sluggish blood,
I look not mine to call;

But, like a truant freed,
Fly to the woods, and claim
A pleasure for the deed
Of my inglorious name:

And am content, denied
The best, in choosing right;
For Nature can delight
Fancies unoccupied
With ecstasies so sweet
As none can even guess,
Who walk not with the feet
Of joy in idleness.

Then leave your joyless ways,
My friend, my joys to see.
The day you come shall be
The choice of chosen days:
You shall be lost, and learn
New being, and forget
The world, till your return
Shall bring your first regret.

## SPRING.

### ODE II.

### REPLY.

BEHOLD! the radiant Spring,
In splendour decked anew,
Down from her heaven of blue
Returns on sunlit wing:
The zephyrs of her train
In fleecy clouds disport,
And birds to greet her reign
Summon their silvan court.

And here in street and square
The prisoned trees contest
Her favour with the best,
To robe themselves full fair:
And forth their buds provoke,
Forgetting winter brown,
And all the mire and smoke
That wrapped the dingy town.

Now he that loves indeed
His pleasure must awake,
Lest any pleasure take
Its flight, and he not heed;

For of his few short years
Another now invites
His hungry soul, and cheers
His life with new delights.

And who loves Nature more
Than he, whose painful art
Has taught and skilled his heart
To read her skill and lore?
Whose spirit leaps more high,
Plucking the pale primrose,
Than his whose feet must fly
The pasture where it grows?

One long in city pent
Forgets, or must complain:
But think not I can stain
My heaven with discontent;
Nor wallow with that sad,
Backsliding herd, who cry
That Truth must make man bad,
And pleasure is a lie.

Rather while Reason lives
To mark me from the beast,
I'll teach her serve at least
To heal the wound she gives:

Nor need she strain her powers
Beyond a common flight,
To make the passing hours
Happy from morn till night.

Since health our toil rewards,
And strength is labour's prize,
I hate not, nor despise
The work my lot accords;
Nor fret with fears unkind
The tender joys, that bless
My hard-won peace of mind,
In hours of idleness.

Then what charm company
Can give, know I, — if wine
Go round, or throats combine
To set dumb music free.
Or deep in wintertide
When winds without make moan,
I love my own fireside
Not least when most alone.

Then oft I turn the page
In which our country's name,
Spoiling the Greek of fame,
Shall sound in every age:

Or some Terentian play
Renew, whose excellent
Adjusted folds betray
How once Menander went.

Or if grave study suit
The yet unwearied brain,
Plato can teach again,
And Socrates dispute;
Till fancy in a dream
Confront their souls with mine,
Crowning the mind supreme,
And her delights divine.

While pleasure yet can be
Pleasant, and fancy sweet,
I bid all care retreat
From my philosophy;
Which, when I come to try
Your simpler life, will find,
I doubt not, joys to vie
With those I leave behind.

I HAVE loved flowers that fade,
Within whose magic tents
Rich hues have marriage made
With sweet unmemoried scents:
A honeymoon delight, —
A joy of love at sight,
That ages in an hour: —
My song be like a flower!

I have loved airs, that die
Before their charm is writ
Along a liquid sky
Trembling to welcome it.
Notes, that with pulse of fire
Proclaim the spirit's desire,
Then die, and are nowhere: —
My song be like an air!

Die, song, die like a breath,
And wither as a bloom:
Fear not a flowery death,
Dread not an airy tomb!
Fly with delight, fly hence!
'Twas thine love's tender sense
To feast, now on thy bier
Beauty shall shed a tear.

## LONDON SNOW.

WHEN men were all asleep the snow came flying,
In large white flakes falling on the city brown,
Stealthily and perpetually settling and loosely lying,
Hushing the latest traffic of the drowsy town;
Deadening, muffling, stifling its murmurs failing;
Lazily and incessantly floating down and down!
Silently sifting and veiling road, roof and railing;
Hiding difference, making unevenness even,
Into angles and crevices softly drifting and sailing.
All night it fell, and when full inches seven
It lay in the depth of its uncompacted lightness,
Its clouds blew off from a high and frosty heaven;
And all woke earlier for the unaccustomed brightness
Of the winter dawning, the strange unheavenly glare:
The eye marvelled-marvelled at the dazzling whiteness;
The ear hearkened to the stillness of the solemn air;
No sound of wheel rumbling nor of foot falling,
And the busy morning cries came thin and spare.
Then boys I heard, as they went to school, calling,
They gathered up the crystal manna to freeze
Their tongues with tasting, their hands with snow-balling;
Or rioted in a drift, plunging up to the knees;
Or peering up from under the white-mossed wonder,
'O look at the trees!' they cried, 'O look at the trees!'

With lessened load a few carts creak and blunder,
Following along the white deserted way,
A country company long dispersed asunder;
When now already the sun, in pale display
Standing by Paul's high dome, spread forth below
His sparkling beams, and awoke the stir of the day.
For now doors open, and war is waged with the snow;
And trains of sombre men, past tale of number,
Tread long brown paths, as toward their toil they go:
But even for them awhile no cares encumber
Their minds diverted; the daily word unspoken,
The daily thoughts of labour and sorrow slumber
At the sight of the beauty that greets them, for the charm they have broken.

## ON A DEAD CHILD.

PERFECT little body, without fault or stain on thee,
With promise of strength and manhood full and fair!
Though cold and stark and bare,
The bloom and the charm of life doth awhile remain on thee.

Thy mother's treasure wert thou; — alas! no longer
To visit her heart with wondrous joy; to be
Thy father's pride; — ah, he
Must gather his faith together, and his strength make stronger.

To me, as I move thee now in the last duty,
Dost thou with a turn or gesture anon respond;
Startling my fancy fond
With a chance attitude of the head, a freak of beauty.

Thy hand clasps, as 'twas wont, my finger, and holds it:
But the grasp is the clasp of Death, heartbreaking and stiff;
Yet feels to my hand as if
'Twas still thy will, thy pleasure and trust that enfolds it.

So I lay thee there, thy sunken eyelids closing, —
Go lie thou there in thy coffin, thy last little bed! —
Propping thy wise, sad head,
Thy firm, pale hands across thy chest disposing.

So quiet! doth the change content thee? — Death,
whither hath he taken thee?
To a world, do I think, that rights the disaster of this?
The vision of which I miss,
Who weep for the body, and wish but to warm thee
and awaken thee?

Ah! little at best can all our hopes avail us
To lift this sorrow, or cheer us, when in the dark,
Unwilling, alone we embark,
And the things we have seen and have known and have
heard of, fail us.

## SONG.

I LOVE my lady's eyes
  Above the beauties rare
She most is wont to prize,
Above her sunny hair,
And all that face to face
Her glass repeats of grace.

For those are still the same
To her and all that see:
But oh! her eyes will flame
When they do look on me:
And so above the rest
I love her eyes the best.

Now say [*Say, O say! saith the music*]
  Who likes my song? —
I knew you by your eyes,
That rest on nothing long,
And have forgot surprise;
And stray [*Stray, O stray! saith the music*]
  as mine will stray,
The while my love's away.

O YOUTH whose hope is high,
Who dost to Truth aspire,
Whether thou live or die,
O look not back nor tire.

Thou that art bold to fly
Through tempest, flood and fire,
Nor dost not shrink to try
Thy heart in torments dire:

If thou canst Death defy,
If thy Faith is entire,
Press onward, for thine eye
Shall see thy heart's desire.

Beauty and love are nigh,
And with their deathless quire
Soon shall thine eager cry
Be numbered and expire.

FOUR SONNETS

*From*

THE GROWTH OF LOVE.

XXVIII.

The fabled sea-snake, old Leviathan,
Or else what grisly beast of scaly chine
That champed the oceanwrack, and swashed the brine
Before the new and milder days of man,
Had never rib nor bray nor swindging fan
Like his iron swimmer of the Clyde or Tyne,
Late born of golden seed to breed a line
Of offspring swifter and more huge of plan.

Straight is her going, for upon the sun
When once she hath looked, her path and place are plain:
With tireless speed she smiteth one by one
The shuddering seas and foams along the main:
And her eased breath when her wild race is run
Roars through her nostrils like a hurricane.

## LVI.

The world comes not to an end: her city-hives
Swarm with the tokens of a changeless trade,
With rolling wheel, driver and flagging jade,
Rich men and beggars, children, priests and wives.
New homes on old are set as lives on lives,
Invention with invention overlaid:
But still or tool or toy or book or blade
Shaped for the hand that holds and toils and strives.

The men I meet work as their fathers wrought
With little bettered means: for works depend
On works and overlap, and thought on thought.
And through all change the smiles of hope amend
The weariest face, the same love changed in nought:
In this thing too the world comes not to an end.

## LXX.

The dark and serious angel who so long
Vexed his immortal strength in charge of me
Hath smiled for joy and fled in liberty
To take his pastime with the peerless throng.
Oft had I done his noble keeping wrong,
Wounding his heart to wonder what might be
God's purpose in a soul of such degree:
And there he had left me but for mandate strong.

But seeing thee with me now, his task at close
He knoweth, and wherefore he was bid to stay
And work confusion of so many foes.
The thanks he looks to have from me I pay,
Yet fear some heavenly envy as he goes
Unto what great reward I cannot say.

## LXXIV.

Ye blessed saints that now in heaven enjoy
The purchase of those tears the world's disdain,
Doth love still with his war your peace annoy,
Or hath Death freed you from his ancient pain?
Have ye no springtide and no burst of May
In flowers and leafy trees, when solemn night
Pants with love music, and the holy day
Breaks on the ear with songs of heavenly light?

What make ye and what strive for? keep ye thought
Of us, or in new excellence divine
Is old forgot: or do ye count for naught
What the Greek did and what the Florentine?
We keep your memories well: O in your store
Live not our best joys treasured evermore?

# The Bibelot

In *Villon's imperishable verse* 'Mais oũ sont les neiges d'antan' *lies summed the whole of Joachim Du Bellay's life. In that unearthly line out-breathes the sigh of an entire generation of men and women become aweary of pleasure, who feel they are about to die. An earlier age possessed its own poignant outcry of defiance and farewell:* 'Ave, Faustina Imperatrix, morituri te salutant.'—*an echo from a world grown old even in the days of Catullus.*

*To Walter Pater as to Sir Thomas Browne two centuries before him, was given a clairvoyant sense of the imperial Past. The drums and tramplings of its conquests again reverberated in living ears; and that the poured out passion of antiquity might find a master of its silence, its successive veils were withdrawn for him—the interpreter of its dead potency.*

*In all of this supreme poetic insight there is a touch of* morbidezza: *these folk are* revenants *who from behind moth-eaten arras come with a faded air as of secret chambers long sealed up. If we touch them*

*they will vanish. He who had the clue and made converse with them has, alas, fared forth upon their self-same journey; perhaps has met Du Bellay and sought speech with La Gioconda: or, it may be, there is neither knowledge, nor device nor wisdom where they and he are gone.*

# JOACHIM DU BELLAY: A RENAISSANCE STUDY (1525-1560)

*by*

WALTER PATER.

*Happy the man, like wise Ulysses tried,*
*Or him of yore that got the Fleece of Gold,*
*Who comes at last, from travels manifold,*
*Among his kith and kindred to abide!*

*When shall I see from my small hamlet-side*
*Once more the blue and curling smoke unrolled?*
*When the poor boundaries of my house behold,—*
*Poor, but to me as any province wide?*

*Ah, more than these imperious piles of Rome*
*Smile the low portals of my boyhood's home!*
*More than their marble must its slate-roof be!*

*More than the Tiber's flood my Loire is still!*
*More than the Palatine my native hill,*
*And the soft air of Anjou than the sea!*

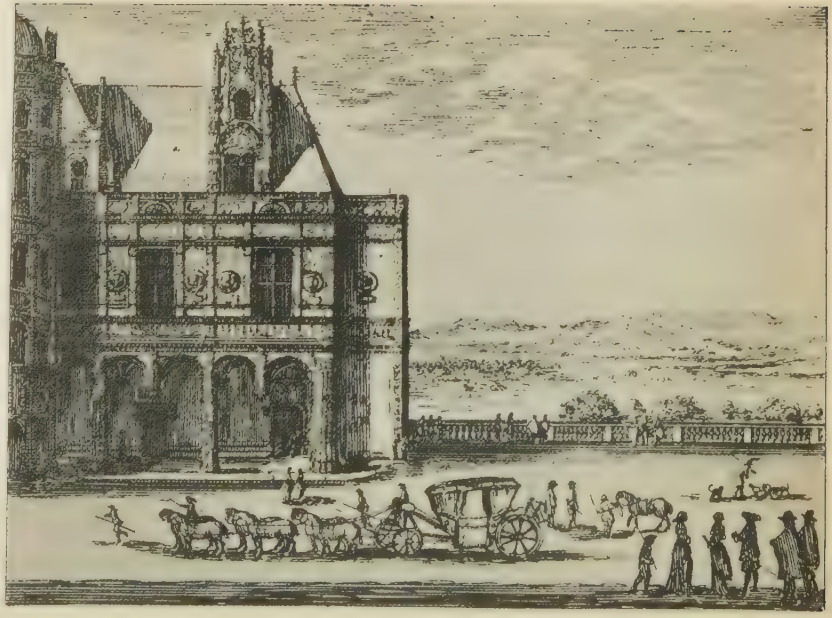
JOACHIM DU BELLAY.

(*Austin Dobson.*)

THE exact date of Du Bellay's birth is unknown. He was certainly a little younger than Ronsard, who was born in September, 1524, although an attempt has been made to prove that his birth took place in 1525, as a compensation from Nature to France for the battle of Pavia. As a poet Du Bellay had the start, by a few months of Ronsard; his *Recueil* was published in 1549. The question of priority in the new style of poetry caused a quarrel, which did not long separate the two singers. Du Bellay is perhaps the most interesting of the Pleiad, that company of Seven, who attempted to reform French verse, by inspiring it with the enthusiasm of the Renaissance. His book *L'Illustration de la langue Française* is a plea for the study of ancient models and for the improvement of the vernacular. In this effort Du Bellay and Ronsard are the predecessors of Malherbe, and of André Chénier, more successful through their frank eagerness than the former, less fortunate in the possession of critical learning and appreciative taste than the latter. There is something in Du Bellay's life, in the artistic nature checked by occupation in affairs — he was the secretary of Cardinal Du Bellay — in the regret and affection with which Rome depressed and allured him, which reminds the English reader of the thwarted career of Clough.

ANDREW LANG.

(*Ballads and Lyrics of Old France.*)



Chateau de Gaillon

*From the etching by Israel Silvestre*

Blending the grace of Italian ornament with the strength of Gothic design, this celebrated chateau of the French Renaissance period displays the qualities that make Joachim Du Bellay a prince of *belles-lettres*. It was his distinction, as a contemporary of Ronsard in sixteenth-century France, to give to the French language the grace, rhythm and perfection that the early French architects did to such noble edifices as this of Gaillon or that of Chenonceaux, Blois, Chambord.

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

## JOACHIM DU BELLAY.

In the middle of the sixteenth century, when the spirit of the Renaissance was everywhere, and people had begun to look back with distaste on the works of the middle age, the old Gothic manner had still one chance more, in borrowing something from the rival which was about to supplant it. In this way there was produced, chiefly in France, a new and peculiar phase of taste with qualities and a charm of its own, blending the somewhat attenuated grace of Italian ornament with the general outlines of Northern design. It produced the *Château de Gaillon,* as you may still see it in the delicate engravings of Israël Silvestre — a Gothic donjon veiled faintly by a surface of dainty Italian traceries — Chenonceaux, Blois, Chambord, and the church of Brou. In painting, there came from Italy workmen like *Maître Roux* and the masters of the school of Fontainebleau, to have their later Italian voluptuousness attempered by the naïve and silvery qualities of the native style; and it was characteristic of these painters that they were most successful in painting on glass, an art so essentially medieval. Taking it up where the middle age had

left it, they found their whole work among the last subtleties of colour and line; and keeping within the true limits of their material, they got quite a new order of effects from it, and felt their way to refinements on colour never dreamed of by those older workmen, the glass-painters of Chartres or Le Mans. What is called the *Renaissance in France* is thus not so much the introduction of a wholly new taste ready-made from Italy, but rather the finest and subtlest phase of the middle age itself, its last fleeting splendour and temperate Saint Martin's summer. In poetry, the Gothic spirit in France had produced a thousand songs; and in the Renaissance, French poetry too did but borrow something to blend with a native growth, and the poems of Ronsard, with their ingenuity, their delicately figured surfaces, their slightness, their fanciful combinations of rhyme, are but the correlative of the traceries of the house of Jacques Cœur at Bourges, or the *Maison de Justice* at Rouen.

There was indeed something in the native French taste naturally akin to that Italian *finesse*. The characteristic of French work had always been a certain nicety, a remarkable

daintiness of hand, *une netteté remarquable d'exécution*. In the paintings of François Clouet, for example, or rather of the Clouets — for there was a whole family of them — painters remarkable for their resistance to Italian influences, there is a silveriness of colour and a clearness of expression which distinguish them very definitely from their Flemish neighbours, Hemling or the Van Eycks. And this nicety is not less characteristic of old French poetry. A light, aërial delicacy, a simple elegance—*une netteté remarquable d'exécution:* — these are essential characteristies alike of Villon's poetry, and of the *Hours of Anne of Brittany*. They are characteristic too of a hundred French Gothic carvings and traceries. Alike in the old Gothic cathedrals, and in their counterpart, the old Gothic *chansons de geste,* the rough and ponderous mass becomes, as if by passing for a moment into happier conditions, or through a more gracious stratum of air, graceful and refined, like the carved ferneries on the granite church at Folgoat, or the lines which describe the fair priestly hands of Archbishop Turpin, in the song of Roland;

although both alike there is a fund of mere Gothic strength, or heaviness.[1]

And Villon's songs and Clouet's painting are like these. It is the higher touch making itself felt here and there, betraying itself, like nobler blood in a lower stock, by a fine line or gesture or expression, the turn of a wrist, the tapering of a finger. In Ronsard's time that rougher element seemed likely to predominate. No one can turn over the pages of Rabelais without feeling how much need there was of softening, of castigation. To effect this softening is the object of the revolution in poetry which is connected with Ronsard's name. Casting about for the means of thus refining upon and saving the character of French literature, he accepted that influx of Renaissance taste, which, leaving the buildings, the language, the art, the poetry of France, at bottom, what they were, old French Gothic still, gilds their surfaces with a strange, delightful, foreign aspect passing over all that Northern land, in itself neither deeper nor more permanent than a

1 The purely artistic aspects of this subject have been interpreted, in a work of great taste and learning, by Mrs. Mark Pattison:—*The Renaissance of Art in France.*

chance effect of light. He reinforces, he doubles the French daintiness by Italian *finesse*. Thereupon, nearly all the force and all the seriousness of French work disappear; only the elegance, the aërial touch, the perfect manner remain. But this elegance, this manner, this daintiness of execution are consummate, and have an unmistakable æsthetic value.

So the old French *chanson*, which, like the old Northern Gothic ornament, though it sometimes refined itself into a sort of weird elegance, was often, in its essence, something rude and formless, became in the hands of Ronsard a Pindaric ode. He gave it structure, a sustained system, *strophe* and *anti-strophe*, and taught it a changefulness and variety of metre which keep the curiosity always excited, so that the very aspect of it, as it lies written on the page, carries the eye lightly onwards, and of which this is a good instance: —

*Avril, la grace, et le ris*
*'De Cypris,*
*Le flair et la douce haleine:*
*Avril, le parfum des dieux,*
*Qui, des cieux,*
*Sentent l'odeur de la plaine;*

*C'est toy, courtois et gentil,*
*Qui d'exil*
*Retire ces passageres,*
*Ces arondelles qui vont,*
*Et qui sont*
*Du printemps les messageres.*

That is not by Ronsard, but by Remy Belleau, for Ronsard soon came to have a school. Six other poets threw in their lot with him in his literary revolution — this Remy Belleau, Antoine de Baif, Pontus de Tyard, Étienne Jodelle, Jean Daurat, and lastly Joachim du Bellay; and with that strange love of emblems which is characteristic of the time, which covered all the works of Francis the First with the salamander, and all the works of Henry the Second with the double crescent, and all the works of Anne of Brittany with the knotted cord, they called themselves the *Pleiad;* seven in all, although, as happens with the celestial Pleiad, if you scrutinise this constellation of poets more carefully you may find there a great number of minor stars.

The first note of this literary revolution was struck by Joachim du Bellay in a little tract written at the early age of twenty-four, which coming to us through three centuries

seems of yesterday, so full is it of those delicate critical distinctions which are sometimes supposed peculiar to modern writers. The piece has for its title *La Deffense et Illustration de la langue Françoyse;* and its problem is how to illustrate or ennoble the French language, to give it lustre. We are accustomed to speak of the varied critical and creative movement of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as the *Renaissance,* and because we have a single name for it we may sometimes fancy that there was more unity in the thing itself than there really was. Even the Reformation, that other great movement of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, had far less unity, far less of combined action, than is at first sight supposed; and the Renaissance was infinitely less united, less conscious of combined action, than the Reformation. But if anywhere the Renaissance became conscious, as a German philosopher might say, if ever it was understood as a systematic movement by those who took part in it, it is in this little book of Joachim du Bellay's, which it is impossible to read without feeling the excitement, the animation, of change, of discovery. "It is a remarkable fact," says

M. Sainte-Beuve, " and an inversion of what is true of other languages, that in French, prose has always had the precedence over poetry." Du Bellay's prose is perfectly transparent, flexible, and chaste. In many ways it is a more characteristic example of the culture of the *Pleiad* than any of its verse; and those who love the whole movement of which the *Pleiad* is a part, for a weird foreign grace in it, and may be looking about for a true specimen of it, cannot have a better than Joachim du Bellay and this little treatise of his.

Du Bellay's object is to adjust the existing French culture to the rediscovered classical culture; and in discussing this problem, and developing the theories of the *Pleiad,* he has lighted upon many principles of permanent truth and applicability. There were some who despaired of the French language altogether, who thought it naturally incapable of the fulness and elegance of Greek and Latin —*cette élégance et copie qui est en la langue Greque et Romaine* — that science could be adequately discussed, and poetry nobly written, only in the dead languages. " Those who speak thus," says Du Bellay, " make me

think of those relics which one may only see through a little pane of glass, and must not touch with one's hands. That is what these people do with all branches of culture, which they keep shut up in Greek and Latin books, not permitting one to see them otherwise, or transport them out of dead words into those which are alive, and wing their way daily through the mouths of men." "Languages," he says again, "are not born like plants and trees, some naturally feeble and sickly, others healthy and strong and apter to bear the weight of men's conceptions, but all their virtue is generated in the world of choice and men's freewill concerning them. Therefore, I cannot blame too strongly the rashness of some of our countrymen, who being anything rather than Greeks or Latins, depreciate and reject with more than stoical disdain everything written in French; nor can I express my surprise at the odd opinion of some learned men who think that our vulgar tongue is wholly incapable of erudition and good literature."

It was an age of translations. Du Bellay himself translated two books of the *Æneid,* and other poetry, old and new, and there

were some who thought that the translation of the classical literature was the true means of *ennobling* the French language: — strangers are ever favourites with us — *nous favorisons toujours les étrangers.* Du Bellay moderates their expectations. "I do not believe that one can learn the right use of them" — he is speaking of figures and ornament in language — "from translations, because it is impossible to reproduce them with the same grace with which the original author used them. For each language has, I know not what peculiarity of its own; and if you force yourself to express the naturalness (*le naïf*) of this, in another language, observing the law of translation, which is, not to expatiate beyond the limits of the author himself, your words will be constrained, cold and ungraceful." Then he fixes the test of all good translation: — "To prove this, read me Demosthenes and Homer in Latin, Cicero and Virgil in French, and see whether they produce in you the same affections which you experience in reading those authors in the original."

In this effort to ennoble the French language, to give it grace, number, perfection, and as painters do to their pictures, that last,

so desirable, touch—*cette dernière main que nous désirons* — what Du Bellay is pleading for is his mother-tongue, the language, that is, in which one will have the utmost degree of what is moving and passionate. He recognised of what force the music and dignity of anguages are, how they enter into the inmost part of things; and in pleading for the cultivation of the French language, he is pleading for no merely scholastic interest, but for freedom, impulse, reality, not in literature merely, but in daily communion of speech. After all, it was impossible to have this impulse in Greek and Latin, dead languages shut up in books as in reliquaries — *péris et mises en reliquaires de livres*. By aid of this starveling stock — *pauvre plante et vergette* — of the French language, he must speak delicately, movingly, if he is ever to speak so at all; that, or none, must be for him the medium of what he calls, in one of his great hrases, *le discours fatal des choses mondaines* — that discourse about affairs which decides men's fates. And it is his patriotism not to despair of it; he sees it already perfect in all elegance and beauty of words — *parfait en toute élégance et venuste de paroles*.

Du Bellay was born in the disastrous year 1525, the year of the battle of Pavia, and the captivity of Francis the First. His parents died early, and to him, as the younger son, his mother's little estate, *ce petit Liré,* the beloved place of his birth descended. He was brought up by a brother only a little older than himself; and left to themselves the two boys passed their lives in day-dreams of military glory. Their education was neglected; "The time of my youth," says Du Bellay, "was lost, like the flower which no shower waters, and no hand cultivates." He was just twenty years old when the elder brother died, leaving Joachim to be the guardian of his child. It was with regret, with a shrinking feeling of incapacity, that he took upon him the burden of this responsibility. Hitherto he had looked forward to the profession of a soldier, hereditary in his family. But at this time a sickness attacked him which brought him cruel sufferings, and seemed likely to be mortal. It was then for the first time that he read the Greek and Latin poets. These studies came too late to make him what he so much desired to be, a trifler in Greek and Latin verse, like so many

others of his time now forgotten; instead, they made him a lover of his own homely native tongue, that poor starveling stock of the French language. It was through this fortunate shortcoming in his education that he became national and modern; and he learned afterwards to look back on that wild garden of his youth with only a half regret. A certain Cardinal du Bellay was the successful member of the family, a man often employed in high official affairs. It was to him that the thoughts of Joachim turned when it became necessary to choose a profession, and in 1552 he accompanied the Cardinal to Rome. He remained there nearly five years, burdened with the weight of affairs, and languishing with home-sickness. Yet it was under these circumstances that his genius yielded its best fruit. From Rome, which to most men of an imaginative temperament such as his would have yielded so many pleasurable sensations, with all the curiosities of the Renaissance still fresh there, his thoughts went back painfully, longingly, to the country of the Loire, with its wide expanses of waving corn, its homely pointed roofs of grey slate, and its far-off scent of the sea. He

reached home at last, but only to die there, quite suddenly, one wintry day, at the early age of thirty-five.

Much of Du Bellay's poetry illustrates rather the age and school to which he belonged than his own temper and genius. As with the writings of Ronsard and the other poets of the *Pleiad,* its interest depends not so much on the impress of individual genius upon it, as on the circumstance that it was once poetry *à la mode,* that it is part of the manner of a time — a time which made much of manner, and carried it to a high degree of perfection. It is one of the decorations of an age which threw much of its energy into the work of decoration. We feel a pensive pleasure in seeing these faded decorations, and observing how a group of actual men and women pleased themselves long ago. Ronsard's poems are a kind of epitome of his age. On one side of that age, it is true, of the strenuous, the progressive, the serious movement, which was then going on, there is little; but of the catholic side, the losing side, the forlorn hope, hardly a figure is absent. The Queen of Scots, at whose desire Ronsard published his odes, reading him in her north-

ern prison, felt that he was bringing back to her the true flavour of her early days in the court of Catherine at the Louvre, with its exotic Italian gaieties. Those who disliked that poetry, disliked it because they found that age itself distasteful. The poetry of Malherbe came, with its sustained style and weighty sentiment, but with nothing that set people singing; and the lovers of such poetry saw in the poetry of the *Pleiad* only the latest trumpery of the middle age. But the time came also when the school of Malherbe had had its day; and the *Romanticists,* who in their eagerness for excitement, for strange music and imagery, went back to the works of the middle age, accepted the *Pleiad* too with the rest; and in that new middle age which their genius has evoked, the poetry of the *Pleiad* has found its place. At first, with Malherbe, you may find it, like the architecture, the whole mode of life, the very dresses of that time, fantastic, faded, *rococo.* But if you look long enough to understand it, to conceive its sentiment, you will find that those wanton lines have a spirit guiding their caprices. For there is *style* there; one temper has shaped the whole; and everything that

has style, that has been done as no other man or age could have done it, as it could never, for all our trying, be done again, has its true value and interest. Let us dwell upon it for a moment, and try to gather from it that special flower, *ce fleur particulier*, which Ronsard himself tells us every garden has.

It is poetry not for the people, but for a confined circle, for courtiers, great lords and erudite persons, people who desire to be humoured, to gratify a certain refined voluptuousness they have in them. Ronsard loves, or dreams that he loves, a rare and peculiar type of beauty, *la petite pucelle Angevine*, with golden hair and dark eyes. But he has the ambition not only of being a courtier and a lover, but a great scholar also; he is anxious about orthography, about the letter *è Grecque*, the true spelling of Latin names in French writing, and the restoration of the letter *i* to its primitive liberty — *del' i voyelle en sa première liberté*. His poetry is full of quaint, remote learning. He is just a little pedantic, true always to his own express judgment, that to be natural is not enough for one who in poetry desires to produce work worthy of immortality. And there-

withal a certain number of Greek words, which charmed Ronsard and his circle by their gaiety and daintiness, and a certain air of foreign elegance about them, crept into the French language: and there were other strange words which the poets of the *Pleiad* forged for themselves, and which had only an ephemeral existence.

With this was mixed the desire to taste a more exquisite and various music than that of the older French verse, or of the classical poets. The music of the measured, scanned verse of Latin and Greek poetry is one thing; the music of the rhymed, unscanned verse of Villon and the old French poets, *la poésie chantee,* is another. To unite together these two kinds of music in a new school of French poetry, to make verse which should scan and rhyme as well, to search out and harmonise the measure of every syllable, and unite it to the swift, flitting, swallow-like motion of rhyme, to penetrate their poetry with a double music — this was the ambition of the *Pleiad.* They are insatiable of music, they cannot have enough of it; they desire a music of greater compass perhaps than words can possibly yield, to drain out the last drops

of sweetness which a certain note or accent contains.

This eagerness for music is almost the only serious thing in the poetry of the *Pleiad;* and it was Goudimel, the severe and protestant Goudimel, who set Ronsard's songs to music. But except in this matter these poets seem never quite in earnest. The old Greek and Roman mythology, which for the great Italians had been a motive so weighty and severe, becomes with them a mere toy. That "Lord of terrible aspect," *Amor,* has become Love, the boy or the babe. They are full of fine raileries; they delight in diminutives, *ondelette, fontelette, doucelette, Cassandrette.* Their loves are only half real, a vain effort to prolong the imaginative loves of the middle age beyond their natural lifetime. They write love-poems for hire. Like that party of people who tell the tales in Boccaccio's *Decameron,* they form a circle which in an age of great troubles, losses, anxieties, amuses itself with art, poetry, intrigue. But they amuse themselves with wonderful elegance; and sometimes their gaiety becomes satiric, for, as they play, real passions insinuate themselves, and at least the reality of death;

their dejection at the thought of leaving this fair abode of our common daylight — *le beau sejour du commun jour*—is expressed by them with almost wearisome reiteration. But with this sentiment too they are able to trifle: the imagery of death serves for delicate ornament, and they weave into the airy nothingness of their verses their trite reflections on the vanity of life; just as the grotesques of the charnel-house nest themselves, together with birds and flowers and the fancies of the pagan mythology, in the traceries of the architecture of that time, which wantons in its delicate arabesques with the images of old age and death.

Ronsard became deaf at sixteen; and it was this circumstance which finally determined him to be a man of letters instead of a diplomatist, significantly, one might fancy, of a certain premature agedness, and of the tranquil, temperate sweetness appropriate to that, in the school of poetry which he founded. Its charm is that of a thing not vigorous or original, but full of the grace that comes of long study and reiterated refinements, and many steps repeated, and many angles worn down, with an exquisite faintness, *une fadeur*

*exquise,* a certain tenuity and caducity, as for those who can bear nothing vehement or strong; for princes weary of love, like Francis the First, or of pleasure, like Henry the Third, or of action, like Henry the Fourth. Its merits are those of the old, — grace and finish, perfect in minute detail. For these people are a little jaded, and have a constant desire for a subdued and delicate excitement, to warm their creeping fancy a little. They love a constant change of rhyme in poetry, and in their houses that strange, fantastic interweaving of thin, reed-like lines, which are a kind of rhetoric in architecture.

But the poetry of the *Pleiad* is true not only to the physiognomy of its age, but also to its country — *ce pays du Vendomois* — the names and scenery of which so often recur in it; the great Loire, with its long spaces of white sand; the little river Loir; the heathy, upland country, with its scattered pools of water and waste roadsides, and retired manors, with their crazy old feudal defences half fallen into decay; *La Beauce,* the granary of France, where the vast rolling fields of corn seem to anticipate the great western sea itself. It is full of the traits of that country.

We see Du Bellay and Ronsard gardening, or hunting with their dogs, or watch the pastimes of a rainy day; and with this is connected a domesticity, a homeliness and simple goodness, by which this Northern country gains upon the South. They have the love of the aged for warmth, and understand the poetry of winter; for they are not far from the Atlantic, and the west wind which comes up from it, turning the poplars white, spares not this new Italy in France. So the fireside often appears, with the pleasures of winter, about the vast emblazoned chimneys of the time, and with a *bonhomie* as of little children, or old people.

It is in Du Bellay's *Olive,* a collection of sonnets in praise of a half-imaginary lady, *Sonnetz a la louange d'Olive,* that these characteristics are most abundant. Here is a perfectly crystallised specimen: —

*D'amour, de grace, et de haulte valeur*
*Les feux divins estoient ceinctz et les cieulx*
*S'estoient vestuz d'un manteau precieux*
*A raiz ardens de diverse couleur:*
*Tout estoit plein de beauté, de bonheur,*
*La mer tranquille, et le vent gracieulx,*
*Quand celle la nasquit en ces bas lieux*
*Qui a pillé du monde tout l'honneur.*

*Ell' prist son teint des beux lyz blanchissans,*
*Son chef de l'or, ses deux levres des rozes,*
*Et du soleil ses yeux resplandissans:*
*Le ciel usant de liberalité,*
*Mist en l'esprit ses semences encloses,*
*Son nom des Dieux prist l'immortalité.*

That he is thus a characteristic specimen of the poetical taste of that age, is indeed Du Bellay's chief interest. But if his work is to have the highest sort of interest, if it is to do something more than satisfy curiosity, if it is to have an æsthetic as distinct from an historical value, it is not enough for a poet to have been the true child of his age, to have conformed to its æsthetic conditions, and by so conforming to have charmed and stimulated that age; it is necessary that there should be perceptible in his work something individual, inventive, unique, the impress there of the writer's own temper and personality. This impress M. Sainte-Beuve thought he found in the *Antiquités de Rome*, and the *Regrets*, which he ranks as what has been called *poésie intime*, that intensely modern sort of poetry in which the writer has for his aim the portraiture of his own most intimate moods, and to take the reader into his confidence. That generation had other instances

of this intimacy of sentiment: Montaigne's *Essays* are full of it, the carvings of the church of Brou are full of it. M. Sainte-Beuve has perhaps exaggerated the influence of this quality in Du Bellay's *Regrets;* but the very name of the book has a touch of Rousseau about it, and reminds one of a whole generation of self-pitying poets in modern times. It was in the atmosphere of Rome, to him so strange and mournful, that these pale flowers grew up; for that journey to Italy, which he deplored as the greatest misfortune of his life, put him in full possession of his talent, and brought out all its originality. And in effect you do find intimacy, *intimité,* here. The trouble of his life is analysed, and the sentiment of it conveyed directly to our minds; not a great sorrow or passion, but only the sense of loss in passing days, the *ennui* of a dreamer who has to plunge into the world's affairs, the opposition between actual life and the ideal, a longing for rest, nostalgia, home-sickness — that pre-eminently childish, but so suggestive sorrow, as significant of the final regret of all human creatures for the familiar earth and limited sky. The feeling for landscape is often described as a

modern one; still more so is that for antiquity, the sentiment of ruins. Du Bellay has this sentiment. The duration of the hard, sharp outlines of things is a grief to him, and passing his wearisome days among the ruins of ancient Rome, he is consoled by the thought that all must one day end, by the sentiment of the grandeur of nothingness — *la grandeur du rien.* With a strange touch of far-off mysticism, he thinks that the great whole — *le grand tout* — into which all other things pass and lose themselves, ought itself sometimes to perish and pass away. Nothing less can relieve his weariness. From the stately aspects of Rome his thoughts went back continually to France, to the smoking chimneys of his little village, the longer twilight of the North, the soft climate of Anjou — *la douceur Angevine;* yet not so much to the real France, we may be sure, with its dark streets and its roofs of rough-hewn slate, as to that other country, with slenderer towers, and more winding rivers, and trees like flowers, and with softer sunshine on more gracefully-proportioned fields and ways, which the fancy of the exile, and the pilgrim, and of the schoolboy far from home, and of those kept

at home unwillingly, everywhere builds up before or behind them.

He came home at last through the *Grisons,* by slow journeys; and there in the cooler air of his own country, under its skies of milkier blue, the sweetest flower of his genius sprang up. There have been poets whose whole fame has rested on one poem, as Gray's on the *Elegy in a Country Churchyard,* or Ronsard's, as many critics have thought, on the eighteen lines of one famous ode. Du Bellay has almost been the poet of one poem; and this one poem of his is an Italian thing transplanted into that green country of Anjou; out of the Latin verses of Andrea Navagero, into French; but it is a thing in which the matter is almost nothing, and the form almost everything; and the form of the poem as it stands, written in old French, is all Du Bellay's own. It is a song which the winnowers are supposed to sing as they winnow the corn, and they nvoke the winds to lie lightly on the grain.

*D'UN VANNEUR DE BLE AUX VENTS.*

*A vous trouppe legère*
*Qui d'aile passagère*
*Par le monde volez,*

*Et d'un sifflant murmure*
*L'ombrageuse verdure*
*Doulcement esbranlez.*

*J'offre ces violettes,*
*Ces lis & ces fleurettes,*
*Et ces roses icy,*
*Ces vermeillettes roses*
*Sont freschement écloses,*
*Et ces œlliets aussi.*

*Des vostre doulce haleine*
*Eventez ceste plaine*
*Eventez ce sejour;*
*Ce pendant que j'ahanne*
*A mon blé que je vanne*
*A la chaleur du jour.* 1.

That has, in the highest degree, the qualities, the value, of the whole Pleiad school of poetry, of the whole phase of taste from which that school derives — a certain silvery grace of fancy, nearly all the pleasure of which is in the surprise at the happy and dexterous way in which a thing slight in itself is handled. The sweetness of it is by no means to be got at by crushing, as you crush wild herbs to get at their perfume

1 A graceful translation of this and some other poems of the *Pleiad* may be found in *Ballads and Lyrics of Old France*, by Mr. Andrew Lang.

One seems to hear the measured falling of the fans, with a child's pleasure on coming across the incident for the first time, in one of those great barns of Du Bellay's own country, *La Beauce,* the granary of France. A sudden light transfigures a trivial thing, a weather-vane, a windmill, a winnowing flail, the dust in the barn door: a moment — and the thing has vanished, because it was pure effect; but it leaves a relish behind it, a longing that the accident may happen again.

1872.

## *A SONNET TO HEAVENLY BEAUTY.*

### JOACHIM DU BELLAY.

*If this our little life is but a day*
*In the Eternal,—if the years in vain*
*Toil after hours that never come again,—*
*If everything that hath been must decay,*
*Why dreamest thou of joys that pass away,*
*My soul, that my sad body doth restrain?*
*Why of the moment's pleasure art thou fain?*
*Nay, thou hast wings,—nay, seek another stay.*

*There is the joy whereto each soul aspires,*
*And there the rest that all the word desires,*
*And there is love, and peace, and gracious mirth;*
*And there in the most highest heavens shalt thou*
*Behold the Very Beauty, whereof now*
*Thou worshippest the shadow upon earth.*

ANDREW LANG.

# The Bibelot

TWELVE *years ago a modest little volume in dark green covers and white paper label,* — Epigrams of Art, Life, and Nature, *told the few who cared to listen of a new and true poet come among men. An earlier book of verses had fallen upon evil days; but in 1890 with the appearance of* Wordsworth's Grave and other Poems, *William Watson was no longer an unknown singer,* — *he had sought and found fit audience, and thenceforth possessed a name in Literature.*

*The little book of* Epigrams *presently appreciated in value. Later collections of Mr. Watson's verse include a scant half of its hundred quatrains, while the 'Note on Epigram', a piece of compact prose well worth recovery, has been left hidden away in the small square 12mo. of 1884. Readers of* THE BIBELOT *will doubtless rejoice in the possession of our complete reprint now before them.*

*For if the one great poet who shows absolute mastery of the quatrain, as an epigrammatic expression of high imaginative moods, is Walter Savage Landor, it is equally evident that he has found no unworthy successor in William Watson.*

EPIGRAMS
*of*
ART, LIFE, AND NATURE
*by*
WILLIAM WATSON.

"WILLIAM WATSON was born in Burley-in-Wharfedale on the 2d of August, 1858, . . . and in 1880 appeared his first volume, "The Prince's Quest and Other Poems," which, though it altogether failed to win general recognition, had the good fortune to receive praiseful greeting from Dante Rossetti. . . .

"Mr. Watson's next volume, 'Epigrams,' (1884) contained a century of poems, each consisting of a single quatrain, each devoted to a single thought or fancy, and all characterized by a severe condensation in the matter of utterance which justified the general title, though there were few attempts made to achieve that startling or arresting 'point' which, in the popular conception, is the true *raison d'être* of the epigram. There is in the finest of these poems that flawlessness of imaginative rendering which the exigent form demands; and even in the later and more elaborate work by which Mr. Watson first caught the ear of the world he has not surpassed the satisfying perfectness of these cameos and intaglios of verse."

JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE.

# EPIGRAMS
# OF
# ART, LIFE, AND NATURE

I.

Thou dost but flit, my merle! from tree to tree,
While on the heights of morn the lark is loud.
Thou hast no wish thy native world to flee,
Knowing the star is far, and dense the cloud.

II.

In youth the artist voweth lover's vows
To Art, in manhood maketh her his spouse.
Well if her charms yet hold for him such joy
As when he craved some boon and she was coy!

III.

The Poet gathers fruit from every tree,
Yea, grapes from thorns and figs from thistles he.
Pluck'd by his hand, the basest weed that grows
Towers to a lily, reddens to a rose.

IV.

## THE PLAY OF "KING LEAR."

Here Love the slain with Love the slayer lies;
  Deep drown'd are both in the same sunless pool.
Up from its depths that mirror thundering skies
  Bubbles the wan mirth of the mirthless Fool.

V.

## BYRON THE VOLUPTUARY.

Too avid of earth's bliss, he was of those
  Whom Delight flies because they give her chase.
Only the odour of her wild hair blows
  Back in their faces hungering for her face.

VI.

'Tis human fortune's happiest height, to be
  A spirit melodious, lucid, poised, and whole:
Second in order of felicity
  I hold it, to have walk'd with such a soul.

VII.

I close your Marlowe's page, my Shakspere's ope.
  How welcome — after gong and cymbal's din —
The continuity, the long slow slope
  And vast curves of the gradual violin!

Melencolia

*From the engraving by Albrecht Durer*

This most famous of Dürer's engravings has provoked endless speculation, such as finds interpretation in Watson's great quatrain, here given, but the meaning of the picture remains an enigma. It is the reply of a profoundly imaginative mind to the question, "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ?"

Courtesy of the New York Public Library.

VIII.

## SHELLEY AND HARRIET WESTBROOK.

A great star stoop'd from heaven and loved a flower
Grown in earth's garden — loved it for an hour:
Let eyes which trace his orbit in the spheres
Refuse not, to a ruin'd rosebud, tears.

IX.

## DÜRER'S 'MELENCOLIA.'

What holds her fix'd far eyes nor lets them range?
Not the strange sea, strange earth, or heaven more strange;
But her own phantom dwarfing these great three.
More strange than all, more old than heaven, earth, sea.

X.

To Art we go as to a well, athirst,
And drinking see our shadow, and the sky's,
But wholly 'neath the water must be mers'd
To clasp the naiad Truth where low she lies.

XI.

The beasts in field are glad, and have not wit
To know why leap'd their hearts when spring-time shone.
Man looks at his own bliss, considers it,
Weighs it with curious fingers; and 'tis gone.

XII.

## THINKERS, PAST AND PRESENT.

God, by the earlier sceptic, was exiled;
The later is more lenient grown and mild:
He sanctions God, provided you agree
To any other name for deity.

XIII.

## TO A POET.

Time, the extortioner, from richest beauty
Takes heavy toll and wrings rapacious duty.
Austere of feature if thou carve thy rhyme,
Perchance 'twill pay the lesser tax to Time.

XIV.

## THE YEAR'S MINSTRELSY.

Spring, the low prelude of a lordlier song:
  Summer, a music without hint of death:
Autumn, a cadence lingeringly long:
  Winter, a pause; — the Minstrel-Year takes breath.

XV.

## INSCRIPTION

*On a rock having the likeness of immense human features.*

The seafowls build in wrinkles of my face.
  Ages ere man was, man was mock'd of me.
Kings fall, gods die, worlds crash; — at my throne's base
  In showers of bright white thunder breaks the sea.

XVI.

## KEATS.

He dwelt with the bright gods of elder time,
  On earth and in their cloudy haunts above.
He loved them: and, in recompense sublime,
  The gods, alas! gave him their fatal love.

XVII.

## THE RUINED ABBEY.

Flower-fondled, clasp'd in ivy's close caress,
  It seems allied with Nature, yet apart: —
Of wood's and wave's insensate loveliness
  The glad, sad, tranquil, passionate, human heart.

XVIII.

## ANTONY AT ACTIUM.

He holds a dubious balance: — yet *that* scale,
Whose freight the world is, surely shall prevail?
No; Cleopatra droppeth into *this*
One counterpoising orient sultry kiss.

XIX.

## BACH, IN THE FUGUES AND PRELUDES

Contentedly with strictest strands confined,
Sports in the sun that oceanic mind:
To leap their bourn these waves did never long,
Or roll against the stars their rockbound song.

XX.

Nettle and dockleaf ancient neighbours be:
And herb-of-healing jostles bane-berry.
Grows by the bank which Marah's waters lave
The tree that maketh sweet the bitter wave.

XXI.

My friend the apothecary o'er the way
Doth in his window Byron's bust display.
Once, at Childe Harold's voice, did Europe bow:
He wears a patent lung-protector now.

XXII.

FROM THE FRENCH.

Says Marmontel, The secret's mine
Of Racine's art-of-verse divine.
To do thee justice, Marmontel,
Never was secret kept so well.

XXIII.

FROM THE SPANISH.

The stage is all men's mirror clear.
  They who condemn it, judgment pass
Upon themselves. Who fly it, fear
  To meet their image in the glass.

XXIV.

Momentous to himself as I to me
Hath each man been that ever woman bore;
Once, in a lightning-flash of sympathy,
I *felt* this truth, an instant, and no more.

XXV.

What would we here, what would we here at all, —
Vex'd with the hungering eye and thirsting ear, —
Whirl'd with the whirling of the sleepless ball?
Behold we know not ev'n what would we here.

XXVI.

Daily by his own hands are writ out fair
In a great book the great thoughts of the King.
We can but mark the purport here and there
For very wonder at the handwriting.

XXVII.

If Nature be a phantasm as thou say'st,
A splendid fiction and prodigious dream,
To reach the real and true I'll make no haste,
More than content with worlds that only seem.

XXVIII.

## BACK FROM ABROAD.

I wearied of that southern sky and main,
  Ocean and heaven one mutual bland blue smile.
Welcome the vapour-tarnish'd crown again
  And wind-torn girdle of the our northern isle!

XXIX.

## TO ROSSETTI DEAD.

Rich spirit escap'd these mortal hindrances
  And dense impediments of crumbling clay,
To join thy kin thou journeyest: thou from these
  Time-sunder'd wast; Keats, Dante, Tintoret they.

XXX.

The gods man makes he breaks; proclaims them each
  Immortal, and himself outlives them all:
But whom he set not up he cannot reach
  To shake His cloud-dark sun-bright pedestal.

XXXI.

In mid whirl of the dance of Time ye start,
  Start at the cold touch of Eternity,
And cast your cloaks about you, and depart.
  The minstrels pause not in their minstrelsy.

XXXII.

## TO EDWARD DOWDEN.

*On learning that he was about to be engaged upon the Life of Shelley.*

Thy task will yield thee much sad happiness
With the sea-amorous Ariel, sea-betray'd.
Thyself I gratulate; and him not less,
The swift wild Sprite, who such a friend hath made!

XXXIII.

## MICHELANGELO'S "MOSES."

The captain's might, and mystery of the seer —
Remoteness of Jehovah's colloquist,
Nearness of man's heaven-advocate — are here:
Alone Mount Nebo's harsh foreshadow is miss'd.

XXXIV.

## ROCHEFOUCAULD CONSISTENT.

Sage Duke, thy creed who runs may read —
*Men feign in every word and deed.*
Therewith thy practice well agreed,
For sure am I thou feign'dst thy creed.

XXXV.

## THE COURSE OF MUSIC. — TO CERTAIN CONTEMPORARY MUSICIANS.

Through Formalism her feet progress —
Reach Form, — yet still would onward press.
There bid her tarry! 'Tis, I guess,
But few steps more to Formlessness.

XXXVI.

Like leaves on the swoln stream of the swift days
  Do all men somewhither move rushingly;
While Man stands at the brink, with eyes that gaze
  Back to the source and forward to the sea.

XXXVII.

To keep in sight Perfection, and adore
  The vision, is the artist's best delight;
His bitterest pang, that he can ne'er do more
  Than keep her long'd-for loveliness in sight.

XXXVIII.

## TWO POETS.

A peacock's-tail-like splendour hath this Muse,
With eyes that see not throng'd, and gorgeous hues.
The swan's white grace that other wears instead,
Stately with stem-like throat and flower-like head.

XXXIX.

## "ON SUCH A NIGHT."

On such a night as this, pale Hero found,
By the blown waters, the world's sweetness drown'd.
And all was woe beneath the moonbeam, save
The innumerable laugh of leagues of wave.

XL.

Thou canst not loose the tangles: let them be.
Accept the shadow with the verity.
Aye at one birth, Truth and the Dream are born.
Lo! near the Ivory Gate, the Gate of Horn.

XLI.

The children romp within the graveyard's pale;
The lark sings o'er a madhouse, or a gaol; —
Such nice antitheses of perfect poise
Chance in her curious rhetoric employs.

XLII.

## WRITTEN IN A VOLUME OF CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI'S POEMS.

Songstress, in all times ended and begun,
  Thy billowy-bosom'd fellows are not three.
Of those sweet peers, the grass is green o'er one;
  And blue above the other is the sea.

XLIII.

THE ALPS.

Adieu, white brows of Europe! sovereign brows,
That wear the sunset for a golden tiar.
With me in memory shall your phantoms house
For ever, whiter than yourselves, and higher.

XLIV.

Our lithe thoughts gambol close to God's abyss,
Children whose home is by the precipice.
Fear not thy little ones shall o'er it fall:
Solid, though viewless, is the girdling wall.

XLV.

Lives there whom Pain hath evermore pass'd by
And Sorrow shunn'd with an averted eye?
Him do thou pity, him above the rest,
Him of all hapless mortals most unbless'd.

XLVI.

SHELLEY'S DEATH.

'Twas some enamour'd Nereid craved a storm
Of Eolus, her minstrel to immerse
In blue cold waves and white caresses warm:
So the sea whelm'd him, whelming not his verse.

XLVII.

## THE CATHEDRAL SPIRE.

It soars like hearts of hapless men who dare
  To sue for gifts the gods refuse to allot;
Who climb for ever toward they know not where,
  Baffled for ever by they know not what.

XLVIII.

'Tis meet the Poet sometimes walk, unchid,
In vagueness of the word-spun veil half-hid.
'Tis meet the mountain sometimes be allowed
To cloak its heaven-conversant peaks with cloud.

XLIX.

Say what thou wilt, the young are happy never.
Give me bless'd Age, beyond the fire and fever, —
Past the delight that shatters, hope that stings,
And eager flutt'ring of life's ignorant wings.

L.

## AN EPITAPH.

His friends he loved. His fellest earthly foes —
  Cats — I believe he did but feign to hate.
My hand will miss the insinuated nose,
  Mine eyes the tail that wagg'd contempt at Fate.

LI.

## A MARGINAL NOTE ON "THE TEMPEST."

The Truth is shackles and an iron door.
  In dreams alone we drink of liberty.
For fetters whilst unfelt are bonds no more,
  And free they are who think that they are free.

LII.

Who never knew a sorrow grow his friend
And half regretted from his threshold wend?
Who never long'd his tear-scorcht eyes to lave
Rather with any than with Lethe's wave?

LIII.

"How weak are words — to carry thoughts like mine!"
Saith each dull dangler round the much-bored Nine.
Yet words sufficed for Shakspere's suit when he
Woo'd Time, and won instead Eternity.

LIV.

## AN ALLEGED CHARACTERISTIC OF GOETHE.

'Tis writ, O Dogs, that Goethe hated you.
I doubt: — for was not he a poet true?
True poets but transcendent lovers be,
And one great love-confession poesy.

LV.

## THE TOWN, BY GASLIGHT.

Here age loathes age, and youth doth youth decoy
With pleasure's joyless travesty of joy;
And Sin and Death with link'd arms walk the street;
And night's mad heart doth beat, and beat, and beat.

LVI.

## BYRON AND WORDSWORTH.

For Byron, song was an insatiate flame
To fling his heart in when the world stood by.
To Wordsworth like his mountain brooks it came,
An earthborn coolness colour'd with the sky.

LVII.

## THE METROPOLITAN UNDERGROUND RAILWAY.

Here were a goodly place wherein to die; —
Grown latterly to sudden change averse,
All violent contrasts fain avoid would I
On passing from this world into a worse.

LVIII.

Onward the chariot of the Untarrying moves;
Nor day divulges him nor night conceals;
Thou hear'st the echo of unreturning hooves
And thunder of irrevocable wheels.

LIX.

A deft musician does the breeze become
  Whenever an Æolian harp it finds:
Hornpipe and hurdygurdy both are dumb
  Unto the most musicianly of winds.

LX.

## ON SEEING THE TOMB OF INFANT BROTHERS TWIN-BORN.

Mates of the cradle, fellows of the grave,
  A handbreadth parts them in the mould below;
Whom, had they lived, perhaps the estranging wave,
  Or hate — or love — had sunder'd wide enow.

LXI.

## A MAIDEN'S EPITAPH.

She dwelt among us till the flowers, 'tis said,
  Grew jealous of her: with precipitate feet,
As loth to wrong them unawares, she fled.
  Earth is less fragrant now, and heaven more sweet.

LXII.

I follow Beauty; of her train am I:
  Beauty whose voice is earth and sea and air;
Who serveth, and her hands for all things ply;
  Who reigneth, and her throne is everywhere.

LXIII.

Full high we soar, and dive exceeding deep,
And tease the gods to fling the unwilling meed;
And best of guerdons is the grassy sleep
And dusty end of all our dream and deed.

LXIV.

## ON READING HOW THE WIDOW OF WAGNER CUT OFF HER HAIR, AND PLACED IT IN HER HUSBAND'S COFFIN WITH HIS CORPSE.

Her head's bright harvest, shorn, she laid i' the mould,
Flooding death's emptiness with billowy gold.
He sleeps; and in his earthly dreams, can see
Her lustrous love illume eternity.

LXV.

## A SOMETIME CONTEMPORARY.

Ah vain, thrice vain in the end, thy rage and hate.
Vain and thrice vain, as all shall see who wait.
For hawk at last shall be outsoar'd by dove,
And throats of thunder quell'd by lips of love.

LXVI.

## DARWINISM UPSIDE-DOWN.

The public voice, though faltering, still demurs
To own that men have apes for ancestors.
The inverse marvel fronts me daily, when
I talk with apes whose ancestors were men.

LXVII.

## MERLIN.

He — who made Nature jealous with his Art —
He slumbers folded in the oak-tree's heart.
And in his own heart, like a flower night-furl'd,
Slumbers the folded secret of the world.

LXVIII.

Immured in sense, with fivefold bonds confined,
  Rest we content if whispers from the stars
In waftings of the incalculable wind
  Come blown at midnight through our prison-bars.

LXIX.

Once more a perfect morn! With feet that trod
  Earth's green, and sun-kiss'd hair that swept heaven's
    blue
Affable, smiling, aweless — I met God,
  Delighted with his work as when 'twas new.

LXX.

## BYRON'S "DON JUAN."

One singer loud among our latter quire
  Likens to ocean this expanse of song.
Hoist sail, who would the waves' salt breath inspire!
  But fear a lurch, whose stomachs are not strong.

LXXI.

## A HINT TO THE SHADE OF LAMB.*

What! our Inspired Dyspeptic must select
  Thee too, my heart's own Elia, to revile?
Avenge thee, gentle ghost! Rise, and project
  A club of authors all damn'd by Carlyle.

LXXII.

I know the tenebrous moods that interpose
  Thick solid horror 'twixt our eyes and Day!
Who scape them? Sages? Saints? Perhaps: and those
  Rapt hogs, in heaven of hog-swill, o'er the way.

LXXIII.

For metaphors of man we search the skies,
  And find our allegory in all the air.
We gaze on Nature with Narcissus-eyes,
  Enamour'd of our shadow everywhere.

---

* See his essay embodying the proposal for a club of damned authors.

LXXIV.

## ART.

The thousand painful steps at last are trod,
  At last the temple's difficult door we win;
But perfect on his pedestal, the god
  Freezes us hopeless when we enter in.

LXXV.

## ON LONGFELLOW'S DEATH.

No puissant singer he, whose silence grieves
  To-day the great West's tender heart and strong;
No singer vast of voice: yet one who leaves
  His native air the sweeter for his song.

LXXVI.

Thou deemest that the soul through death ascends
  To lordlier halls than sumptuous Life doth rule.
They needs were bright and wide, to make amends
  For such a strait and lampless vestibule.

LXXVII.

I roam'd through streets with human ruins strewn
  Where mirthless laughter hid Sin's writhing heart.
The lamps shone round me; o'er me shone the moon:
  And earth and heaven seem'd very wide apart.

LXXVIII.

## SHAKSPERE'S POURTRAYAL OF CÆSAR.

With critic eye earth's lordliest soul he scann'd,
And drew the demigod with captious hand.
Perverse! to paint the sunspots every one,
And quite leave out the interlustrous sun.

LXXIX.

## TO MR. GLADSTONE (1882).

Sculptor of nobler stuff than marble thou,
Shaping the morrow from the plastic Now.
Fain wouldst thou carve it fair; — alas! what use?
A churl's rais'd foot can mar a Pheidian Zeus.

LXXX.

Love, like a bird, hath perch'd upon a spray
For thee and me to hearken what he sings.
Contented, he forgets to fly away;
But hush! . . . remind not Eros of his wings.

LXXXI.

Toiling and yearning, 'tis man's doom to see
No perfect creature fashion'd of his hands.
Insulted by a flower's immaculacy,
And mock'd at by the flawless stars he stands.

LXXXII.

## TO WALT WHITMAN.

Some find thee foul and rank and fetid, Walt,
  Who cannot tell Arabia from a sty.
Thou followest Truth, nor fearest, nor dost halt;
  Truth: and the sole uncleanness is a lie.

LXXXIII.

## TO GOETHE.

With earth well pleas'd, thou liv'dst to sing and know;
  Yet somewhat as the stars in thine own song,
That haste not, neither rest, didst o'er it glow:
  A light that, setting, for more light didst long.

LXXXIV.

The statue — Buonarroti said — doth wait,
Thrall'd in the block, for me to emancipate.
The poem — saith the poet — wanders free
Till I betray it to captivity.

LXXXV.

Not yet the ghosts of the old gods are laid.
By the wing'd archer still, youth's wounds are made.
And still in the blue deeps of virgins' eyes
Dances the wave whence Venus did arise.

LXXXVI.

## BROWNING.

A lion! — And with such can no beast cope.
The shaggiest lion couch'd on Parnasse' slope.
Entoil'd at times with meshes hard to undo:
Which God inspire the mouse to nibble through!

LXXXVII.

## TO A SEABIRD.

Fain would I have thee barter fates with me —
Lone loiterer where the shells like jewels be,
Hung on the fringe and fray'd hem of the sea.
But no! — 'twere cruel, white-wing'd Bliss! to thee.

LXXXVIII.

## "MANY THINGS ARE GROWING PLAIN AND CLEAR TO ME."

(Schiller's Last Words.)

What saw he when this mist of flesh 'gan lift?
Truth like a dawn flame tow'rd him through the rift,
And old ghosts hide them from the wild new gleam.
He wonder'd; and shook off this clinging dream.

LXXXIX.

TANTALUS.

He woo's for ever with foil'd lips of drouth
The wave that wearies not to mock his mouth.
'Tis Lethe's. They alone that tide have quaff'd
Who never thirsted for the oblivious draught.

XC.

Brook, from whose bridge the wandering idler peers
To watch thy small fish dart or cool floor shine,
I would that bridge whose arches all are years
Spann'd not a less transparent wave than thine!

XCI.

One music maketh its occult abode
In all things scatter'd from great Beauty's hand;
And evermore the deepest words of God
Are yet the easiest to understand.

XCII.

Enough of mournful melodies, my lute!
Be henceforth joyous, or be henceforth mute.
Song's breath is wasted when it does but fan
The smouldering infelicity of man.

XCIII.

For thee, the gods yet haunt Olympus hill:
Thou seest beside each muse-frequented rill
The twice nine feet of song a-straying still:
For there is nought he may not see, who will.

XCIV.

## TO A FOOLISH WISE MAN.

The world's an orange — thou hast suck'd its juice;
  But wherefore all this pomp and pride and puffing?
Somehow a goose is none the less a goose
  Though moon and stars be minc'd to yield it stuffing.

XCV.

## "SUBJECTIVITY" IN ART.

If, in the Work, must needs stand manifest
  The Person, be his features, therein shown,
Like a man's thought in a god's words express'd —
  His own and somehow greater than his own.

XCVI.

Think not thy wisdom can illume away
The ancient tanglement of night and day.
Enough, to acknowledge both, and both revere:
They see not clearliest who see all things clear.

XCVII.

I pluck'd this flower, O brighter flower, for thee,
There where the river dies into the sea.
To kiss it the wild west wind hath made free:
Kiss it thyself and give it back to me.

XCVIII.

Marr'd is our music by the singer's tears
And vex'd with tremblings of the harper's hand.
The perfect notes of the symphonious spheres
Who but the listening stars may understand?

XCIX.

To be as this old elm full loth were I,
That shakes in the autumn storm its palsied head.
Hewn by the weird last woodman let me lie
Ere the path rustle with my foliage shed.

C.

His rhymes the poet flings at all men's feet,
And whoso will may trample on his rhymes.
Should Time let die a song that's true and sweet
The singer's loss were more than match'd by Time's.

## A NOTE ON EPIGRAM.

As most commonly understood, the Epigram is primarily an instrument of social satire or personal invective—a handy weapon, having the keenness of the stiletto, and its glitter. In our language are some ingenious definitions of its nature and function—themselves examples of what they set out to define—based on the popular tradition of Epigram Disappointed must any reader have been who looked to find that tradition illustrated throughout the foregoing pages. Poems conformable thereto are here to be found; but they are exceptional, not regular, in the scheme of this volume.

Concerning the nobler sort of Epigram a few words may not be misplaced here; but I make no pretence of tracing its development, or otherwise treating it historically. In that connection it may be sufficient to allude to the fact that the character of the Greek Epigram was early determined by its being originally an INSCRIPTION, then a short poem in Elegiacs, with the qualities of simple beauty and conciseness appropriate to lapidary or monumental uses. All manner of subjects were deemed eligible for treatment in this form, and the Epigram sometimes became a condensed (perhaps a strangulated) lyric. It was in Latin, and with Martial, that its close was first forced into sharp relief. In his hands it was often anything but "a box where sweets compacted lie," but it began to resemble some boxes in its way of shutting with a snap or click. In French literature the Greek example had of course no practical

influence, and the Epigram became what Boileau describes: —

*" L'épigramme plus libre en son tour, plus borné,*
*N'est souvent qu'un bon mot de deux rimes orné."*

Many lines, and groups of lines, which we are in the habit of quoting from a body of continuous verse, are essentially Epigrams. Sometimes a couplet thus detached and exhibited is made all the more impressive by isolation. Taken together with its context, we see what has led up to it, and what grows out of it. Set it apart, and it seems a thing self-generated, self-sustinent, individually whole. When Landor says:—

*" Fears, like the needle verging to the Pole,*
*Tremble and tremble into certainty."*

or when Shakspere says:—

*" They that stand high have many blasts to shake them,*
*And when they fall they dash themselves to pieces,"*

we feel that in each case a thought has been presented, metaphorically, in utmost completeness; not that it is incapable of amplification, only we have an instinct which tells us that any addition of metaphorical detail would be an incumbrance. These things are perfect Epigrams. Shelley's image of Life as a splendid discoloration of eternity's pure whiteness, is an Epigram—a magnificent one,—

*" Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,*
*Stains the white radiance of eternity."*

But when he adds:—

*"Until death tramples it to fragments,"*

he injures by a superfluity what is already complete. The additional circumstance does not support the image (for the image supports itself), but overweights it, disturbing its sublime oneness of impression. The same might also be said of another forcibly compact line of *Adonais*:—

*"Nought we know dies; shall that alone which knows?"*

Shelley does not leave it here, but liberates and pursues afresh the already captured quarry, thus:—

*"Nought we know dies; shall that alone which knows*
*Be as a sword consumed before the sheath*
*With quenchless lightning?"*

A fine Epigram is thus made and marred; but of course one has no right to blame Shelley in this instance, for, on the principle laid down in Pope's familiar couplet:—

*"In every work regard the writer's end,*
*Since none can compass more than they intend,"*

he is abundantly justified. And indeed no poet that ever sung could be more innocent of epigrammatic intentions than Shelley usually was; for the lyrical temper, of which he was the incarnation, has little in common with the bent towards Epigram, and thus we are not unprepared to find that the least lyrical of modern English poets of the front rank, Walter Savage Landor, was our greatest modern Epigrammatist.

Among Arthur's heroes, it was the mighty Lancelot who—

*"Best clove a king, or caught a butterfly."*

In a later day it was Landor, the sculptor of Gebir, and Count Julian, who was ablest to mould a Colossus or incise a gem. His best quatrain is also his best known. No other poem in our language contains such "infinite riches" in such "a little room"; yet, packed as are these treasures, they are not crushed.—

*"I strove with none, for none was worth my strife.*
*Nature I loved, and next to nature, art.*
*I warm'd both hands before the fire of life:*
*It sinks; and I am ready to depart."*

This poem is a condensed autobiography of Landor's outward and inward careers. His intellectual aloofness in the nineteenth century; his disdain of rivalry with contemporaries; his arrogant yet somehow inoffensive self-assertion, the gracious despotism of the man; his passion for art, that true passion for art which is strongest in minds whose passion for nature is yet more strong; his keen zest of existence, long undiminished, but giving place eventually to the *tedium vitæ* which clouded his final years; lastly, his entire willingness to take leave of this old comrade Life, whose society is not so vivacious as it once was, and whom he half loves, half scorns; all this is here. And together with all this there is perfection of simple verse-craft, unshadowed lucidity of phrase, and completeness of utterance.

Outside Landor, English literature has had hitherto no quatrains comparable for weight and loftiness to his, with, perhaps, the sole exception of the following remarkable "Epigram on the death of Edward Forbes," by Sydney Dobell, a poet from whom one could hardly have expected anything so perfect within so strict limits,—a mystic and trancendentalist, accustomed to wed his intensely spiritualised thought to a literary style as efflorescent as that of the Elizabethans, glowing with a richness of decoration not less prodigal than theirs:—

*"Nature, a jealous mistress, laid him low.*
*He woo'd and won her; and, by love made bold,*
*She showed him more than mortal man should know,*
*Then slew him lest her secret should be told."*

Scattered here and there, amid the interesting if often unshapely verse of Emerson, we come upon a quatrain or couplet of almost the best gnomic or sententious-oracular sort. Here is a specially beautiful example:—

*"Thou canst not wave thy staff in air,*
*Or dip thy paddle in the lake,*
*But it carves the bow of beauty there,*
*And the ripples in rhyme the oar forsake."*

To add anything respecting my own theory or practice of Epigram were superfluous, since that has already spoken in its own cause, successfully or otherwise, throughout a hundred pages. It seemed allowable, however, to cite a few examples—the best to be had—from other writers, in order to make definite my own position

with relation to what has been done before in the same field. In English, such precedents are few; but in German there is the Sixth Book of the *West-Östlicher Divan*, besides many admirable quatrains scattered up and down Goethe's previous writings, and the writings of other German poets; and Oriental literature has its Omar Khay-yam. As for myself, if here and there I have succeeded in arresting some casual wing of thought as it flew, some transient wave of emotion as it subsided, giving to the thought a not futile fixity, a not idle permanence to the motion, my accomplishment is on the level of my hope.

W. W.

LIVERPOOL,
*November, 1883.*

# The Bibelot

"I AM *reading 'Bothwell.' . . . It is surely a wonderful work of art. I do not think anything greater has been produced in our age, in spite of its inordinate length and strange affectation of style. However, one reads oneself into a sympathy with his use of language, and then the sustained effort of thought and imagination is overpowering in its splendour. It seems to me the most virile exercise of the poetic power in combination with historic accuracy that our literature of this century can show.*"

*After twenty-two years this dictum of John Addington Symonds remains one of the soundest criticisms extant. For it is indisputable that the splendid series of tragedies by Algernon Charles Swinburne beginning with* Chastelard, *towered to its loftiest height in* Bothwell; *thence slowly evolving, a superb epos, came to its matchless close in* Mary Stuart.

*The second act of* Bothwell *is a play in itself. Toward Darnley has converged the implacable hate of the deadliest woman of all her deadly race. When we recall the*

*antecedent probabilities,—and the Casket letters are surely Mary's own,—the killing of this man was but a foregone conclusion. By short relays she had brought him to Kirk of Field; and she has told us in words that have not lost their heartrending pathos,—his words,—that in her he had put his trust,—she had become as his God to him.*

*Then, while preparation is being made for his murder, they meet for the last time; the hour strikes,—a sign is given,—these two touch hands and part. Beneath a flare of cressets the Queen passes into the wintry night: upon Darnley, trapped and betrayed, falls a great horror of darkness. An ecstasy of passionate fear overwhelms him,—a sense of bodily anguish, shared by Faustus and Edward II,—the entire scene being conceived and executed in Marlowe's fiercest spirit. Alone of Swinburne's contemporaries, Browning's Guido Franceschini is comparable to Darnley in his final isolation and despair.*

# The Death of Darnley

*Four scenes from*

Bothwell: A Tragedy

*by*

Algernon Charles Swinburne.

*"For him of whose dead face mine eyes take leave*
*As my free soul of shameful thought on him,*
*Let him have private burial some fit night*
*By David whom he slew. I mind me now*
*'Tis not a year since I fled forth with him*
*Even through the graves where he shall lie alone,*
*And passing through their dusty deadly ways*
*For some few minutes of the rustling night*
*I felt his hand quake; he will quake not now*
*To sleep thee all night long."*—mary stuart.

(Bothwell: *Act III, Scene II.*)

"To rid herself of a traitor and murderer who could not be got rid of by formal process of law was the object and the problem which the action of Darnley had inevitably set before his royal consort. . . . Towards that unhappy traitor her own conduct was not more merciless than just, or more treacherous than necessary if justice was at all to be done upon him. . . Never was a lawless act committed with more excuse or more pretext for regarding it as lawful.

Supposing she had taken part in the slaying of Darnley, there is every excuse for her; supposing she had not, there is none. Considered from any possible point of view, the tragic story of her life in Scotland admits but of one interpretation which is not incompatible with the impression she left on all friends and all foes alike. And this interpretation is simply that she bated Darnley with a passionate but justifiable hatred, and loved Bothwell with a passionate but pardonable love. For the rest of her career, I cannot but think that whatever was evil and ignoble in it was the work of education or of circumstance; whatever was good and noble, the gift of nature or of God."

A. C. SWINBURNE.

# THE DEATH OF DARNLEY,

## FOUR SCENES FROM

## BOTHWELL: A TRAGEDY.

### ARGUMENT.

HENRY, Lord Darnley, became the husband of Mary Stuart, July 29, 1565, and within a few months an estrangement took place; one result being that David Rizzio, secretary to the queen, was slain through Darnley's orders, or at least connivance, on March 9, 1566. From that time onward Mary fell under the influence of James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, with whom she plotted the murder of her husband. Believing in her guaranty of personal safety, Darnley was induced by Mary to take up residence in a lonely house outside the walls of Edinburgh, known as Kirk of Field, and there, during the night of February 9, 1567, came to his death.

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MARY STUART.
HENRY LORD DARNLEY, *King Consort.*
JAMES HEPBURN, *Earl of Bothwell.*
*The Earls of* HUNTLEY, ARGYLE *and* CASSILIS.
LORD ROBERT STUART, *Abbot of St. Cross.*
JOHN HEPBURN *of Bolton,* ORMISTON, HAY *of Talla, Conspirators with* BOTHWELL.
NELSON, TAYLOR, *servants to* DARNLEY.
NICHOLAS HUBERT, *surnamed* PARIS, *servant to* BOTHWELL.
PLACE.—*Edinburgh.*
TIME.—*February, 1567.*

## I.

### Behind Kirk of Field.

Bothwell, Ormiston, Hepburn *of Bolton, and* Hay *of Talla.*

*Bothwell.* If it be done to-morrow, we shall stand
The surer that the queen slept here to-night.
Cousin, bring you my knaves from Holyrood
At nightfall to that hinder gate wherethrough
We three shall give you passage with your charge
To the strait garden-plot beyond the walls
Whereto the door that opens from beneath
Shall stand unbolted, and you entering spread
Along the blind floor of the nether vault
The train that shall set all these walls on wing.

*Ormiston.* How said you, that his groom here had the keys?

*Bothwell.* That under door which lets us down lacks none,
There is no lock to palter with; it needs
But leave the bolt undrawn; and yesterday
By the queen's order was the door removed
At bottom of the stair, to be instead
A cover for his bath-vat; so there stands
But the main door now.

*Hepburn of Bolton.* That was well devised:
She sleeps beneath his chamber here to-night?

*Bothwell.* Ay, to the west.

*Hay of Talla.* She has the stouter heart.
I have trod as deep in the red wash o' the wars
As who walks reddest, yet I could not sleep,
I doubt, with next night's dead man overhead.

*Bothwell.* We are past the season of divided wills;
Where but one thought is, nothing to be done
Has power to hurt the heart that holds it fast
Or leave the purpose weaker by a wound
Given it of doubt or afterthought: we have
One thing to do, one eye to see it, one hand
To pluck it from the occasion; what he wills
None but a fool would mix his will to achieve
With pain and fear; the mind once shaped and set
That works and yet looks back and weeps to do
Is but half man's; and all a man's hath she.

*Hepburn of Bolton.* Yet woman-moulded outward, clothed upon
As 'twere with feminine raiment, touched with thoughts
Of female-coloured fashion, woman's craft:
She sees and thinks on what could touch not us
Nor graze in passing even our skirts of sense:
Takes order for the hangings of his bed
Whom we must kill to her hand, lest water soil
The sable velvet from his bath, and bids
Pluck down and save them; such slight things and strange

As take the thought and hold the eye of girls
Her soul, as full of great things as it is,
As large and fiery, bright and passionate,
Takes no less thought for, and hath heed of these
No less than of high deed and deep desire
Beyond where sight can scale or thought can dive
Of narrower eye and shallower spirit than hers.

*Bothwell.* Most royal is she, but of soul not all
Uncurable, nor of all shafts that fly
Scathless, nor of all shots invulnerable;
She had no part else and no power in us,
No part in all that mingling makes up man,
No power upon our earth who are earthlier made;
She has the more might on men's ways of soul
Not being almighty, nor from all man's moods
Divided, but as passion-touched and mixed
With all such moods as men are; nay, not these,
But such as bear the rule of these and lead
Which way they will — women's; and being so mixed
She is even the more entire, more whole and strong,
Herself and no self other. She nor I
Live now on thoughts and words; the deed it is,
Our deed alone we live by, till being done
It leave us time for life that deals with these.
I will be with you ere night fall again
Within the town-wall; thither get you now,
And doubt not of us.

*Ormiston.* Doubt not you to find
All ready by the night and need: farewell.

[*Exeunt all but* Bothwell.

*Bothwell.* The time is breathless; earth sees heaven as chill
In the after air declining from high day.
I would the winds would muster, or the sun
Show half an eye-blink of his face that hangs
Now downward to the sea, curbed in with cloud,
And with a brief breath fire the rack that flies.
Why should not flame break over Arthur's Seat
This hour, and all the heaven with burning tongues
Cry from the world's height to the under line
That ends it for us gazing? If the sky
Had speech as it hath fire, or night or day
Voice to declare God's pleasure or his wrath
With their dumb lips of light, from moon or sun
Or the mute mouths of stars, would earth that heard
Take thought and counsel of the cause, to stir
Men's hearts up for our deed's sake here? I am wrought
Out of myself even by this pause and peace
In heaven and earth, that will not know of us
Nor what we compass; in this face of things,
Here in this eye of everduring life
That changes not in changing, fear and hope,
The life we live, the life we take, alike

Decline and dwindle from the shape they held,
Their import and significance; all seem
Less good and evil, worth less hate and love,
Than we would have them for our high heart's sake.
How shall this day when all these days are done
Seem to me standing where it sets my feet?
Nay, whence shall I behold it? or who knows
What crest or chasm, what pit or pinnacle,
Shall feel my foot or gulf my body down,
Bear up or break me falling? Fall or stand,
At least I live not as the beasts that serve,
But with a king's life or man's death at last
Make all my travails perfect; and a queen,
The fairest face I have loved and fieriest heart,
Shines with my star or sets.

*Enter* PARIS.

What sends she now?

*Paris.* I came to know if you stand fixed indeed,
Sir, for to-morrow.

*Bothwell.* For to-morrow, man;
What ails him at to-morrow?

*Paris.* My dread lord,
Nought ails me but as part of your design;
But I beseech you by your trust of me,
What says this while my lord of Murray?

*Bothwell.* He!
He will nor help nor hinder — but all's one.

*Paris.* He is wise.

*Bothwell.* But is it to tell me he is wise
That you bestow your own wise tongue on me?
Came you to advise me or to show my trust
How cracked a casket I have closed it in
Who trusted in so white a heart as yours?

*Paris.* I have a message ——

*Bothwell.* Well, the message, then;
And as you are wise, make me not wroth to-day,
Who am but foolish.

*Paris.* Sir, the queen by me
Wills you to know that from her husband's mouth
She is assured there came here yesterday
To him her brother, Abbot of St. Cross,
To warn him of some danger.

*Bothwell.* From his mouth!
Had ever mouth such hunger to eat dust?
Well, it shall soon be filled and shut; what else?

*Paris.* She has taxed hereof her brother ——

*Bothwell.* What, by word?

*Paris.* No, but by note she let him wist she knew it.
Now he denies again his word aloud ——

*Bothwell.* He does the wiselier; there your tongue struck right;
She has wise men to brethren.

*Paris.* And desires
To prove it on the accuser's body, being
Once whole again to meet him.

*Bothwell.* A fair proof:
Doth either sword seek mine for second?

*Paris.* Nay;
But the queen bade me tell you he should go
To her lord's chamber for his challenge-sake
And do that thing ye wot of.

*Bothwell.* Tell the queen
I will speak to him. We must not mar our hand;
Say I will see him before the morrow morn.
Howbeit, it shall be well but for a night
To put our present purpose back, and see
If chance or craft will mend our hand again.
Who strikes most sure strikes deepest; say I go
To try this brother's edge; if he be sure,
He shall well serve us as a glove to wear
And strike, and have the whiter hands to show.

[*Exeunt severally.*

## II.

### Darnley's Chamber.

Darnley *and* Nelson.

*Enter* Robert Stuart.

*Robert Stuart.* I come to change less than a word with you,
And take my leave for all your rest of life.

*Darnley.* I will not speak alone with you again:
Stay by me there.

*Robert Stuart.* Have you not armour on?
You should not sleep with sword ungirt on thigh,
Lest one should fall upon you. For this time
I come indeed to see if you be man
Or ever knew beyond the naked name
What grace and office should belong to man
Or purpose to his sword. Reply not yet;
I know you are sick, weak, pitiful, half dead,
And with the ingrained infection of your soul
Its bodily house grown rotten; all you will;
You cannot swear yourself that piteous thing
That I will not believe you wretcheder;
No flesh could harbour such a worm alive
As this thing in you taken for a soul,
And 'scape corruption; but if you shall live
To stand again afoot and strike one stroke

For your own hand and head, you shall fight with me
Or wear the lie writ red upon your face
With my hand's buffet, that you spake who said
I had given you note of danger from the queen.

*Darnley.* Is it a plot, her plot upon me? Sir,
By God, I never said so; what I said
I have heart and sword to uphold against all swords,
And kill you if I might as many times
As you shall iterate on me this for true
Which is most false. When I may stand and go ——

*Robert Stuart.* Yea, then shall we see fighting. But as now
You can but swear you said not this of me?

*Darnley.* I am not bound to swear it or unswear
At any bidding; but so much I will —
That you may see no hot foul words of yours
Have quenched in me the old thought of fellowship —
As swear again I said but what I might
With honour and clear heart: I spake no word
To bring you in suspicion, or to turn
Thwart eyes upon you of men's jealousies
Or cast you out of favour with the queen;
I said but you did warn me of my life,
As being my fast friend still, I thanked you for it —
I know not what she says I said — but this
I know, I spake no treason of you. See,
This is a foolish wind of wrath that shakes

And wrecks your faith in me, mine own in you
Being firm and flawless; what you have said, you have said;
And what I have spoken of you was no more
Than I had right to speak and rest your friend.

*Robert Stuart.* Will you fight with me to maintain so much?

*Darnley.* If I might rise I would put off my state
To stand against you equal; you did say it,
That I was even as one the law damns dead
And she was parcel of my peril.

*Robert Stuart.* Ay!
You said so to her?

*Darnley.* She will not say I did.

*Robert Stuart.* Plight not your faith to that; I am assured
You said so, and so lied; and this last time
I bind you yet to meet me on this cause
Or bear the lie about you as a badge.

*Darnley.* By God, I will grow strong to fight with you.

*Robert Stuart.* If I shall see your living face again,
It shall be as mine enemy's; foot to foot
And hand to mortal hand we twain will meet,
Or ere the day dawn I shall see you dead.

*Darnley.* I am like to die, then? and your warlike words
Have so much iron in them, and your heart
Such daring to provoke one wellnigh dead?
I wist your tongue would move more tenderly
If I had now my strength of natural hand
And body to bear arms: but these shall come,
And you change face and lower your look to see.

*Robert Stuart.* I will abide my peril; do you the like,
You shall do wisely; should I say farewell,
It were to bid you fare not as they do
Who are of your kind or of your fortune; yet
I bid you, sir, fare better than I think. [*Exit.*

*Darnley.* Ay, you think venomously. What hour to-day
Should the queen come?

*Nelson.* To-night your highness knows
Her man Sebastian weds a maid of hers,
And she makes feast for them in Holyrood
With masque and music; having early supped,
She will be here somewhile with certain lords
To visit you, and so pass back ere night.

*Darnley.* She shall not make so much, when I am revived,
Of outland folk and fiddlers, who should have
Too much of them by this. I would she had come
To see me turn the lie back on his lips.

I did not answer as I might, being whole,
But yet not like a sick man, ha? like one
Whose wit and heart lie sick too with his flesh?

*Nelson.* Nay, with your natural spirit of speech you spoke,
With the same heart and tongue you have in health.

*Darnley.* I think I did; I would she had come betimes.

## III.

THE GARDEN BEHIND KIRK OF FIELD.

BOTHWELL, ORMISTON, HAY.

*Bothwell.* Did I not bid them spare no speed? the devil
I think has maimed their feet in my despite,
To keep a knave so piteous out of hell.
By God, it will be moonrise ere they come.

*Ormiston.* Tush, man! the night is close.

*Bothwell.* Ay, close and safe
As is the lock of a girl's maidenhood
When the gold key turns in it. They halt like jades;
God plague their laggard limbs with goads of fire!
Must they fall spavined now?

*Hay.* Here come they three,
And with charged hands; be not so outward hot,
But as their charge is ere we give it fire.

*Bothwell.* Teach your own togue to take your tune, not mine.

*Enter* HEPBURN *with Servants.*

Have you some devil's cramp in your bones, to crawl
At this worm's race? Set down your load and go.

[*Exeunt Servants.*

What lamed these knaves' feet or belated you,
To hold us here thus till the moon were up?

*Hepburn.* 'Tis not yet risen; and your own word it was
Withheld us till the west should cast off red.

*Bothwell.* Well, we have time. Ye three are hands enough
To bear this down and strew it within the vault
While I go help the queen here bide her hour
Till you send Paris to me for a sign.
Take heed there be no noise. Let but two stay
To fire the train; you, cousin, for my love
Shall be one hand thereto. Pass in, and see
Ye go down sure and softly. From this gate
Ye know the passage under; go, and speed. [*Exit.*

## IV.

### Darnley's Chamber.

The Queen, Darnley, *Earls of* Cassilis, Huntley, *and* Argyle.

*Queen.* But I must chide you for one thing, my lord,
That you would hold your servant Duram here
Though it be for love you bear him; he is sick,
And should not sleep nor watch with you to-night;
You do not well to keep him from the town
Against his health, who should take physic there
And come back whole to serve you.

*Darnley.* Let him go.
I did but bid him leave me not alone;
I will have one for service at my hand.

*Queen.* Have you no more but just this young man gone
Whom I bade go even where was best for him?
Let your page lie at hand here.

*Darnley.* Nay, I will.
You sent off Alexander?

*Queen.* He was sick;
We should show care of them we take to grace
More friendlike than by cherishing ourselves
With their forced company; the grace is more
To take thought for them whom we hold in trust

Than still to exact their service, tax their faith,
Whose faith and service we that lean thereon
Should put to no more toil and pain than needs,
Requiting love with labour.

*Darnley.* You say well;
But what should ail him? save that yesterday
He found his bed-straw here by chance afire
And flung it out at window; on which plea
He would not lie to-night here, till I bade him
Sleep with me as aforetime, being of all
The man bound closest to my love and trust;
Then first he spake of sickness, as you heard
Who sat between us. Nay, but let him go;
The boy shall serve to sleep here.

*Queen.* Sickness makes
All wills to serve it like necessity;
Witness my will to keep my brother here
Whom his wife's sickness at St. Andrew's now
Parts from our feasts and counsels, caught up hence
As if a wind had rapt him.

*Darnley.* She is sick too —
The Lady Murray?

*Queen.* Nigh to death, he says;
I know not: who knows how near death he walks
Who treads as now most upright in the sun?

*Argyle.* Why have we death and sickness in our
mouths
Who come forth of a feast not ended yet
That in good time recalls us?

*Queen.* Presently.
I would you were in health to dance me down
To-night but for the bride's sake; for the groom,
He may live easier that you grace him not
Nor gall with favour or with jealousy.

*Darnley.* We twain shall see this night out otherwise.

*Queen.* I am sure you shall see more of rest than I.

*Darnley.* Except I watch for sickness' sake all night.

*Queen.* That shall you not; I charge you on my love
Sleep sound for my sake.

*Enter* BOTHWELL.

Are not you the bell
That strikes the hour to sunder us, my lord?

*Bothwell.* Madam, I strike not yet.

*Queen.* The better; sit,
And make no sound of parting till your hour,
No timeless note of severance. My fair lord,
Have you no fair word for your noble guests?

*Darnley.* I pray you, sirs, of your own gentleness,
Lay it not to my discourtesy for shame

That I can but thus sickly entertain
The grace ye do me; that I meet it so,
Impute not to my will that is myself
But to my weakness that is none of me
Save as our enemy may be part of us,
And so forgive it.

*Huntley.* Sir, we are fain to see
Even in your gracious words that speak you ill
Some spirit of health already.

*Cassilis.* I would pledge
My name and word you shall not long lie sick
Who bear yourself thus lordlike. [*Noise below.*

*Queen.* Ah! my heart —
It wrings me here in passing; pardon me.

*Bothwell.* God's lightning burn them; will they mar
me now? [*Aside, and exit.*

*Darnley.* Heard you no noise?

*Argyle.* Where?

*Queen.* Some one stirred below;
A chair thrown down or such-like.

*Darnley.* Nay, I caught
A rush and rattle as ——

*Cassilis.* Of pebble-stones?

*Darnley.* Where is my lord gone forth?

*Queen.* Why are you moved?

*Darnley.* I am not moved; I am no fearful fool
To shake and whiten as a winter tree
With no more wind than this is.

*Queen.* Do you think
It is your counsellor come back in wrath
To warn again and threaten?

*Darnley.* Nay, for him
I think he hath learnt a lesson of my rede
To vex his soul and trouble me no more.

*Re-enter* Bothwell.

*Queen.* What deadly news now of what danger, sir?

*Bothwell.* Some fellow bearing faggots for the fire
Slipt at the threshold: I have admonished him
What din his knaveship made even in our ears
As if he had the devil there in his hands.

*Queen (aside).* It was of them?

*Bothwell (aside).* Ay, hell take hold on them,
It was their din, God thank them for it with fire,
Our careful helpers; but I have made them safe:
The train is wellnigh laid now: what remains
To strew I have charged them shed without more sound
Than where the snow strikes.

*Darnley.* Must you part indeed?

*Queen.* They look for us ere long.

*Darnley.* Now know I not
What I would give to hold you here a night,
Even half my life I think, and know not why.

*Queen.* That were too much. I slept here yesterday;
Were you the better for me?

*Darnley.* Ay, and no;
I deemed I was the better till I slept,
And then ——

*Queen.* Why, did my being here break your sleep?
It shall not break to-night then.

*Enter* PARIS, *and stands at the door.*

*Bothwell (aside to Argyle).* Time is come;
Touch him, and give the sign.

*Darnley.* The air turns sharp;
There came a wind as chill as from the pit.
Why do you fix your eyes so fast on me?

*Queen.* Not out of mind to mar your sleep again.

*Darnley.* I will not sleep alone.

*Queen.* Ay, will you not?
The town looks like a smoke whose flame is out,
Deformed of night, defaced and featureless,
Dull as the dead fume of a fallen fire.
There starts out of the cloud a climbing star,
And there is caught and slain.

*Darnley.* Why gaze you so?

*Queen.* I looked to see if there should rise again
Out of its timeless grave the mounting light
That so was overtaken. We must part;
Keep with this kiss this ring again for me
Till I shall ask it of you; and good night.

*Darnley.* A good night it may be to folk that feast;
I see not how it shall be good to me.

*Queen.* It may be better. I must be some hour
Again among the masquers: you that sleep
Shall hear no noise and see no company.

*Enter* NELSON.

For this one night here comes your chamberlain:
Good rest with you. 'Twas just this time last year
David was slain.

*Darnley.* Why tell you me of that?

*Queen.* This very time as now. Good night, my lord.

[*Exeunt all but* DARNLEY *and* NELSON.

*Darnley.* What folk remain by me?

*Nelson.* Sir, four of us:
Myself and Seymour, Taylor and his boy.

*Darnley.* Let Taylor sleep here in my room to-night,
You three in the south gallery.

*Nelson.* Well, my lord.

*Darnley.* I am left here very lonely. She was kind;
Most kind she was; but what should make her speak
Of David's slaying?

*Nelson.* A word that shot by chance;
A shaft of thought that grazed her and flew by.

*Darnley.* Why should she tell me of it? My heart runs low;
As if my blood beat out of tune with life,
I feel the veins shuddering shrink in, and all
My body seem a burden to my soul.
Come, I will think not that way.

*Re-enter* PARIS.

*Paris.* Sir, the queen
Having forgot for haste in parting hence
Her outer cloak of fur, hath sent me for it,
Lest this night's weather strike her blood acold.

*Darnley.* Take it and go. (*Exit* PARIS.) I do not like their eyes,
These foreign folk's that serve her. Is it cold?
I feel cold here.

*Nelson.* A fair sharp night, my lord;
And the air less cumbered than it was with cloud.

*Darnley.* I find no night of all nights fair to me;
I am sick here at my heart all the dark hours.
Give me the book there. Ay, my book of psalms?
What day is this?

*Nelson.* The ninth of February.

*Darnley.* How says it of God's foes, they were afraid
Where no fear was? That am not I: my fear
Dies without food. I am not as were these.
I prithee tell me, of thine honest heart,
Think'st thou I have no cause to feed my fear,
Or keep the bitter life in it alive?

*Nelson.* I know not, sir; but what you give it of food
Is so much taken from your health of heart
That goes to starve your spirit of likely life.

*Darnley.* Why then I will not feed it with false thoughts.
Call here my chamber-fellow. If the heart

*Enter* TAYLOR.

Be but the servant of chance cold and heat,
And the brain bear not rule upon the blood,
We are beasts who call us men. Thomas, good night.
[*Exit* NELSON.
What, shall we watch awhile?

*Taylor.* So please your grace.

*Darnley.* I have more mind to sleep than power to sleep;
Some unrest in me fights against my rest.
Come hither, Will. Of all thy fellows here
I think thou lov'st me; fain am I to think;
I would not live unloved of all men born;

I hope I shall not. Dost thou feel to-night
Thy living blood and spirit at ease in thee?

*Taylor.* Surely, my lord.

*Darnley.* I would thy lord did too.
This is a bitter writing where he saith
How in his prayer he mourns, and hath his heart
Disquieted within him; and again,
The fear of death is fallen upon him, see,
And fearfulness and trembling, as is writ,
Are come upon him, and an horrible dread
Hath him o'erwhelmed: O that I had, saith he,
Wings like a dove! then would I flee away,
And be at rest; would get me then far off
And bide within the wilderness, it saith,
I would make haste to escape. Lo, here am I,
That bide as in a wilderness indeed
And have not wings to bear me forth of fear.
Nor is it an open enemy, he saith,
Hath done me this dishonour: (what hath put
This deadly scripture in mine eye to-night?)
For then I could have borne it; but it was
Even thou, mine own familiar friend, with whom
I took sweet counsel; in the house of God
We walked as friends. Ay, in God's house it was
That we joined hands, even she, my wife and I,
Who took but now sweet counsel mouth to mouth
And kissed as friends together. Wouldst thou think,

She set this ring at parting on my hand
And to my lips her lips? and then she spake
Words of that last year's slaughter. O God, God,
I know not if it be not of thy will
My heart begins to pass into her heart,
Mine eye to read within her eye, and find
Therein a deadlier scripture. Must it be
That I so late should waken, and so young
Die? for I wake as out of sleep to death.
Is there no hand or heart on earth to help?
Mother! my mother! hast thou heart nor hand
To save thy son, to take me hence away,
Far off, and hide me? But I was thy son,
That lay between thy breasts and drank of thee,
And I thy son it is they seek to slay.
My God, my God, how shall they murder me?

*Taylor.* I pray you, comfort your own heart, my lord;
Your passion drives your manhood out of you.

*Darnley.* I know it doth; I am hare-hearted, for
The hunters are upon me. There—and there—
I hear them questing. I shall die, man—die,
And never see the sun more; ay, this hour
Will they come in and slay me. O great God,
Sweet Jesus, will you have me die this death,
Such death as never man before has died?
See how they will not let me pray to you

To take my soul out of their fangs and hell —
Will you not make the sun rise for my sake
That I may see you in the dawn and live
And know the grace that God hath ere I die?

*Taylor.* Sir, for God's love ——

*Darnley.* I say I hear their feet —
Thou hast no ears—God hath no ears for me
Nor eyes to look upon me—hands he hath,
Their bloody hands to smite with, and her heart
Is his toward me to slay me. Let them come;
How do men die? but I so trapped alive—
O, I shall die a dog's death and no man's.
Mary, by Christ whose mother's was your name,
Slay me not! God, turn off from me that heart—
Out of her hands, God, God, deliver me!

HERE ends THE BIBELOT Volume Two. Edited by Thomas B. Mosher and originally published by him at XLV Exchange Street Portland Maine. MDCCCXCVI.